



MLADI U LOKALNOJ VLASTI U HRVATSKOJ
YOUTH IN CROATIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

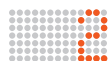
VLASTA ILIŠIN

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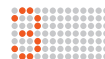
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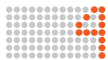


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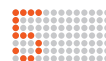
00 Predgovor

➤➤ **DIM JE ORGANIZACIJA CIVILNOG DRUŠTVA** koja osnažuje i potiče građane na aktivizam. U cilju ostvarenja misije DIM provodi programe neformalnog obrazovanja mladih usmjerenih na građanski odgoj za demokraciju, istraživačke projekte vezane uz položaj mladih i akcije zagovaranja i umrežavanja usmjerene na pozitivne promjene politika prema mladima.

Od 2001. godine, DIM provodi program *Obrazovanje za mlade političare/ke*, sa ciljem osnaživanja participacije mladih u procesima donošenja odluka u političkim institucijama i tijelima vlasti na lokalnoj razini te izgradnje kapaciteta mladih lidera u političkim strankama, sindikatima i nevladinim organizacijama. Program tijekom svih godina financiraju *Međunarodni centar Olof Palme* i *Zaklada Friedrich Ebert*.

U okviru programa krajem 2005., proveli smo istraživanje u 123 grada i 21 županiji u Republici Hrvatskoj kojim smo željeli utvrditi razinu participacije mladih u tijelima vlasti na lokalnoj (gradskoj) i regionalnoj (županijskoj) razini. Osnovni cilj ovoga istraživanja bio je ustanoviti kakva je zastupljenost mladih u tijelima lokalne vlasti u Republici Hrvatskoj te koja je njihova stranačka pripadnost i kakva su njihova temeljna sociostrukturalna obilježja. U svrhu utvrđivanja tih značajki ispitana su stranačka pripadnost i neka sociostrukturalna obilježja svih članova tijela lokalne vlasti te zasebno podskupine mladih dužnosnika. Kao mladi članovi tijela vlasti definirani su svi oni koji su u dobi od navršene 18. do navršene 29. godine života, a u skladu s određenjem koje je eksplicirano u Nacionalnom programu djelovanja za mlade.

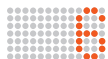
U Hrvatskoj su mladi, kao sudionici političkih procesa, izuzetno marginalizirani. Kroz naš petogodišnji program, koji uključuje niz seminara - predavanja, radionica, treninga na kojima je sudjelovalo više od 200 mladih političkih lidera usvajajući nova znanja i vještine za kvalitetniji rad u svojim organizacijama, susreli smo se sa činjenicom da je njihov rad i angažman rijetko interesantan medijima, političkim akterima, institucijama vlasti, pa čak i njihovim matičnim organizacijama. Ukoliko i sudjeluju u institucionalnoj politici, osobito u tijelima vlasti u kojima se donose odluke, njihov politički utjecaj je minoran. Potaknuti takvim saznanjima, odlučili smo prikupiti relevantne podatke koji će pokazati kako je nužno povećati političku



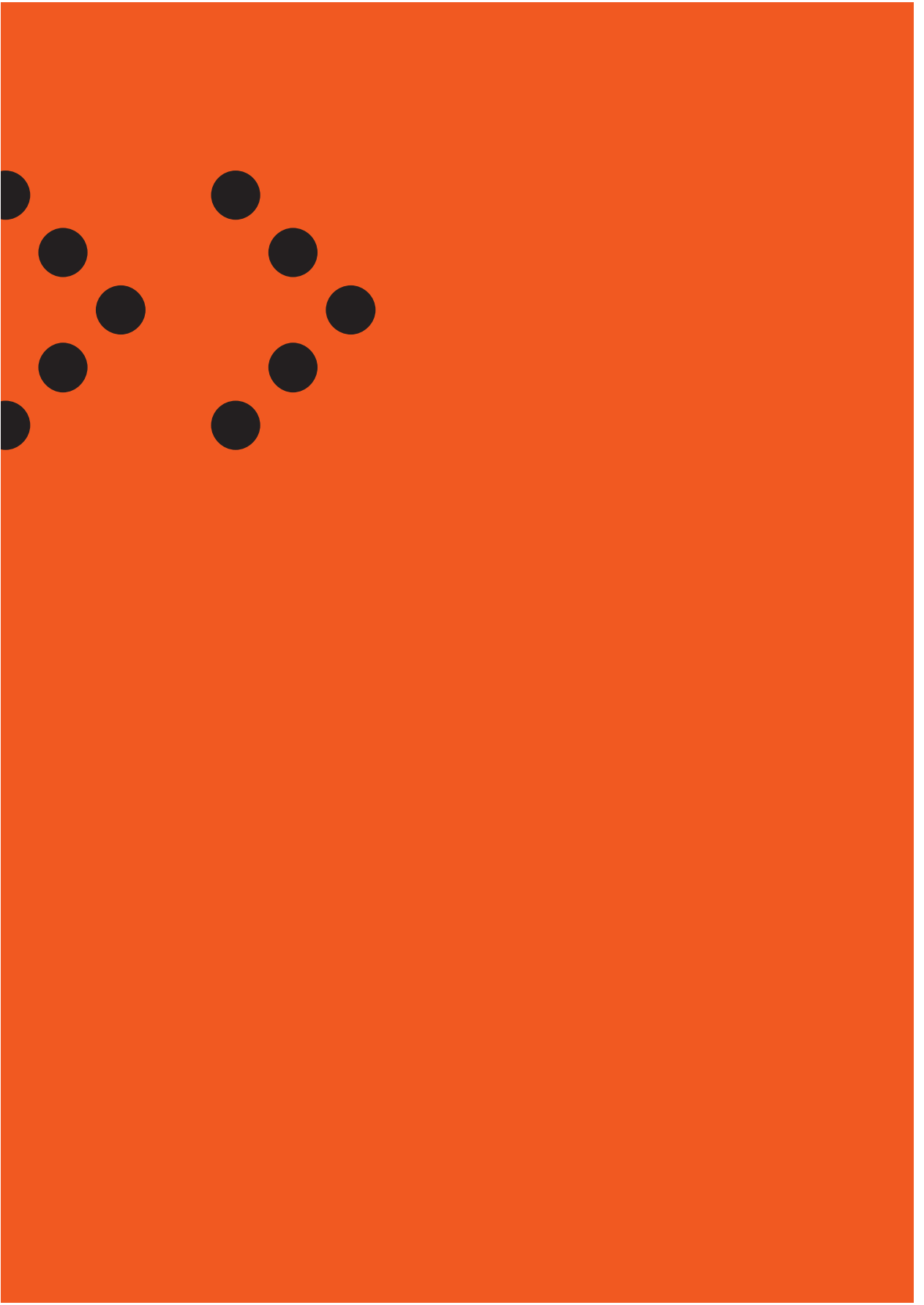
participaciju mladih u institucionalnoj politici te nadamo se, potaknuti političku elitu da bude otvorenija za poticanje i uvođenje mladih ljudi u političku arenu.

Ovim putem zahvaljujemo se svima onima koji su nam u sklopu našeg istraživanja ljubazno izašli u susret i u vrlo kratkom roku dostavili tražene podatke, dr.sc. Vlasti Ilišin sa Instituta za društvena istraživanja u Zagrebu, koja je pripremila upitnik te analizirala dobivene podatke, te donatorima koji iz godine u godinu podržavaju naš rad.

Martina Stažnik





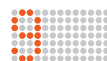


01 Uvod: politička marginaliziranost mladih

» **SVI ONI KOJI SE TEORIJSKI ILI PRAKTIČNO BAVE** mladima trajno su zaokupljeni temom njihove optimalne integracije u društvo pri čemu je ta integracija istodobno i proces i cilj kojemu se teži. Taj proces obuhvaća niz aspekata svakodnevnoga života suvremene omladine - od obiteljske socijalizacije preko obrazovanja i zapošljavanja do političkog djelovanja.

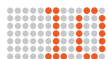
Kada je riječ o političkom djelovanju mladih analize su fokusirane na njihovo aktivno sudjelovanje u društvenim procesima i poslovima, a u tom se kontekstu osobito problematičnom pokazuje politička participacija mladih. Ta se participacija manifestira u institucionalnom i izvaninstitucionalnom obliku pri čemu ti oblici mogu biti međusobno i komplementarni i kompenzacijski (uglavnom kada su kanali ulaska u institucionalnu politiku nedovoljno prohodni ili neadekvatni). U ovoj je analizi pozornost isključivo usmjerena na institucionalnu političku participaciju mladih i to u tijelima odlučivanja na lokalnoj razini kao najvišem stupnju političke participacije građana u lokalnim zajednicama. Ne osporavajući važnost izvaninstitucionalnih oblika političkog djelovanja - posebice za razvoj političke kulture i demokratskih obrazaca ponašanja - usmjerenost na problem institucionalne političke participacije proizlazi iz činjenice da se u demokratskom i pluralističkom društvu različiti interesi građana dominantno artikuliraju, zastupaju i realiziraju posredstvom i unutar političkih institucija. Drukčije rečeno, politička moć, odnosno moć odlučivanja o uvjetima i načinima ostvarivanja postojećih interesa, koncentrirana je u političkim institucijama, i to ponajprije u tijelima vlasti.

Dosadašnja istraživanja u svijetu i Hrvatskoj pokazala su da mladi, u usporedbi sa starijima, manje participiraju u izbornom procesu, češće nisu stranački opredijeljeni, rjeđe su članovi političkih stranaka i ispodprosječno su zastupljeni u tijelima vlasti (Griffin, 1993; Hackket, 1997; Ilišin, 1999). Kada se, primjerice, promatraju nacionalna tijela vlasti vidljivo je da u njima, uz muškarce i akademski obrazovane članove, trajno dominiraju političari srednje dobi, odnosno osobe između 40. i 60. godine života (Hague, Harrop, Breslin, 1998; Ilišin, 1999). Postojeća slaba politička participacija mladih u političkim institucijama i procesima u demokratskim je zemljama prepoznata kao jedan od glavnih problema povezanih s mladima i ujedno kao prijetnja budućnosti reprezentativne demokracije (Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001).



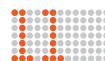
Iz potonjih i drugih razloga koji otežavaju proces društvene i političke integracije mladih, politička tijela Europske unije posvećuju sve veću pozornost tom problemu, nastojeći uključiti mišljenja mladih u koncipiranje zajedničke omladinske politike (*youth policy*). Polazeći od činjenice da suvremene generacije mladih “u sve kasnijoj i kasnijoj dobi postižu status nezavisnosti” (*Novi poticaji...*, 2002: 6), danas se smatra nužnim stvoriti društveni prostor za ravnopravno izražavanje ideja mladih te uvjete za realizaciju njihovih interesa i potreba. Istraživanja, tematske rasprave i politička savjetovanja s predstavnicima mladih u okviru europskih političkih tijela, rezultirala su uvidima da mladi Europljani žele sudjelovati u demokratskim procesima, ali da među njima prevladava nepovjerenje prema političkim institucijama i stav da politički akteri ne vode računa o specifičnim interesima mladih. Mladi žele biti uključeni u političke procese (prije svega na lokalnim razinama) i drže da slika njihove nezainteresiranosti za politiku zapravo odražava nedostatak sredstava, informacija i osposobljenosti za aktivno političko djelovanje. Ujedno smatraju da isključenost mladih iz politike onemogućuje “ispravno funkcioniranje demokracije”, da je “pravo na sudjelovanje osnovno pravo te se mora primjenjivati na sve ljude, bez diskriminacije”, kao i da postoji “potreba širenja sudjelovanja izvan organizacija kojima pripadaju mladi i izvan problematike karakteristične za mlade” (*Novi poticaji...*, 2002: 33).

U nastojanju da se mladi u većoj mjeri pojave kao politički akteri, europske zemlje prakticiraju nekoliko instrumenata za stimuliranje političke participacije i utjecaja mladih. Glavni su oblik sudjelovanja mladih na lokalnim, regionalnim i nacionalnim razinama vijeća mladih (*youth councils*), a u nekim zemljama i parlamenti mladih. Međutim, dosadašnja iskustva pokazala su da postojeći mehanizmi poticanja političkog angažmana mladih ne daju željene rezultate. Analiza A. Schizzerotta i G. Gasperonija (2001) ukazuje na nekoliko manjkavosti u djelovanju vijeća mladih, koja, inače, funkcioniraju ili kao krovne nevladine organizacije udruga mladih, ili kao državna vijeća koja uključuju omladinske i državne predstavnike. Pokazalo se, naime, da ta vijeća predstavljaju tek manjinu mlade generacije, da nisu reprezentant interesa svih socijalnih skupina mladih, da motivacija za članstvo u udrugama mladih postaje sve više pragmatična i utilitarna umjesto (prometejski) aktivistička i da često predstavnici mladih sami više nisu mladi te su utoliko i manje pouzdani zastupnici generacijskih interesa. Dakako, ovdje treba primijetiti da su kritike koje su upućene funkcioniranju postojećih vijeća mladih slične onima koje se inače upućuju reprezentativnim političkim tijelima. Stoga uočeni deficiti nisu razlog za odustajanje od potrebe predstavljanja interesa mladih na političkoj sceni nego ih treba iskoristiti za određivanje adekvatnog smjera u potrazi za takvim oblicima angažmana mladih koji mogu korigirati nepoželjne učinke postojećih.



No, u kontekstu problematiziranja političke participacije mladih simptomatično je svojevrсно izbjegavanje pitanja o povećanju sudjelovanja mladih u tradicionalnim političkim institucijama i procesima. Nakon uvida u izvještaje europskih zemalja o politici prema mladima utvrđeno je (Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001) da postoji manjak sistematiziranih informacija o participaciji mladih u tradicionalnim oblicima zadobivanja političkog utjecaja (glasovanje, članstvo u strankama, izborna kandidatura, zastupljenost u predstavničkim tijelima vlasti). Postojeći podaci, pak, pokazuju da mladi Europljani na izbore izlaze 2-10% rjeđe od prosjeka, da ih u lokalnim, regionalnim i nacionalnim predstavničkim tijelima ima do 1,5% te da povjerenje u političke institucije iskazuje tek trećina mladih (Ilišin, 1999; Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001). Glavni razlog zanemarivanja pitanja o tradicionalnim oblicima političke participacije mladih pronalazi se u tendenciji većine analitičara da tu političku participaciju promatraju “prije kao specifičan, nezreli i ograničeni kanal rezerviran za utjecaj mladih - kao što su omladinske organizacije te vijeća i parlamenti mladih - nego kao način odraslih za zauzimanje mjesta u konvencionalnim političkim procesima” (Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001:65). Upravo takvo zanemarivanje problema ispodprosječne participacije mladih u političkim institucijama razlog je više da se kontinuirano prati i istražuje institucionalno političko djelovanje mladih, a posebice njihova zastupljenost u tijelima odlučivanja.

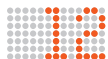
Hrvatska mladež uglavnom dijeli sudbinu svojih europskih vršnjaka kada je riječ o participaciji u tradicionalnim političkim institucijama i procesima, a u lošijem je položaju kada je riječ o vijećima mladih koja u Hrvatskoj tek treba uspostaviti. Međutim, za razumijevanje aktualnog političkog statusa mladih u Hrvatskoj važna je činjenica da je 1990. godine došlo do radikalnih promjena u društvenom i političkom sustavu. Tranzicija iz jednoga u drugi društveni i politički poredak nužno je obilježena društvenom nestabilnošću i kriznim procesima i zbog tih svojih obilježja, načelno gledajući, trebala je stvoriti pogodne uvjete za veći prodor mladih u političku sferu, i to posebice u institucije vlasti (Braungart & Braungart, 1989.). Gledajući šest desetljeća unatrag može se reći da su u Hrvatskoj takve okolnosti nastupile nakon Drugog svjetskog rata, a potom u vrijeme sloma totalitarnog (socijalističkog) sistema potkraj 20. stoljeća i uspostave novog, višestranačkog i demokratskog političkog poretka. Naime, logično je pretpostaviti da stvaranje nove državne zajednice i napuštanje povijesno potrošenih ideoloških i političkih projekata - uz nastojanje da se na osnovi drukčijih ideologija i političkih programa izgrade i odgovarajuće političke institucije i odnosi - načelno zahtijeva i pogoduje angažmanu novih, u starom režimu nekompromitiranih, političkih snaga. Međutim, spomenute sociopovijesne okolnosti i politički prevrati nisu u oba apostrofirana slučaja rezultirali teorijski očekivanim i podjednakim političkim posljedicama za mlade.



Nakon Drugog svjetskog rata oni mladi koji su sudjelovali u ratu na strani pobjednika u velikoj su mjeri zaposjeli nove institucije vlasti u Hrvatskoj (kao i bivšoj Jugoslaviji), pri čemu je većina njih ostala na pozicijama vlasti do svoje pozne dobi ili čak do smrti. Svojevrzne smjene generacija zbivale su se tek povremeno kao prateća posljedica političkih čistki, pa se ulazak mladih u političku nomenklaturu zbivao u pravilu samo u onoj mjeri u kojoj je bilo nužno da se popune ispražnjena mjesta. Tako su mladi postupno dospjeli na margine politike u socijalističkom razdoblju, pri čemu su istraživanja istodobno pokazivala da su upravo oni bili onaj segment populacije koji je većinom odustao od proklamirane ideologije i projekta izgradnje socijalističkog društva (Santrić, 1989), te da su znatno više od starijih prihvaćali liberalne vrijednosti koje su već prodirale u hrvatsko društvo (Ilišin, 1999). Stoga je bilo logično očekivati da na prelasku iz totalitarnog u demokratski politički sustav mladi budu jedan od ključnih aktera radikalnih promjena i potom inauguracije novoga poretka.

Međutim, politička zbivanja u suvremenoj Hrvatskoj - kao i u većini ostalih tranzicijskih zemalja - nisu obilježena političkom afirmacijom mladih. Naprotiv, uz socioekonomski, i njihov se politički položaj u većini elemenata pogoršao u usporedbi s posljednjim desetljećem socijalizma. Mladi u tranzicijskoj Hrvatskoj su tako dvostruko politički marginalizirani, odnosno i kao objekti i kao subjekti političkih procesa. Prvo, njihovi problemi i potrebe rijetko su bili u žiži interesa javnosti i medija - osim nekih nepoželjnih oblika ponašanja (ovisnosti, navijačko nasilje, delinkvencija i slično) što je najčešće bilo prezentirano u predimenzioniranom obliku i na senzacionalistički način - kao i političkih aktera i institucija vlasti (što ujedno ukazuje na to su interesi mladih sporadično bili prisutni u procesu političkog odlučivanja). Tako je tek 2003. godine usvojen *Nacionalni program djelovanja za mlade* kao dokument kojim, između ostaloga, nositelji vlasti deklarativno i stvarno (u mjeri u kojoj će program biti realiziran) iskazuju namjeru da se djelotvornije rješavaju problemi mladih među kojima je i pitanje poboljšanja njihova aktivnog sudjelovanja u društvu. U svrhu ostvarenja potonjeg cilja u Programu se predlaže nekoliko mjera kao što su: davanje aktivnog prava glasa u lokalnim izborima mladima nakon navršene 16. godine života, uspostavljanje vijeća mladih te inoviranje sadržaja obrazovanja za demokraciju u srednjim školama (*Nacionalni program...*, 2003:63).

Drugo, politički utjecaj mladih je minoran jer oni - uz to što njihovi stavovi ne dopiru do javnosti u dovoljnoj mjeri i što su generacijski atomizirani i fragmentirani - vrlo malo participiraju u institucionalnoj politici, a posebice u tijelima vlasti u kojima se donose odluke. Rezultati svih dosadašnjih istraživanja u Hrvatskoj jednoznačni su i sukladni europskim nalazima: mladi su ispodprosječno zastupljeni u političkim institucijama i procesima. Tako istraživanja izbornog ponašanja hrvatskih građana pokazuju da



se mladi češće (za cca 5%) nego stariji deklariraju kao stranački neopredijeljeni, kao što i 5-13% češće od starijih izjavljuju da neće glasovati u izborima (Ilišin, 1999; 2005). Također je utvrđeno da su mladi dvostruko rjeđe od starijih članovi političkih stranaka pri čemu je i kod jednih i kod drugih tijekom tranzicijskog razdoblja osjetno splasnulo entuzijazam izazvan pojavom političkog pluralizma - naime, dok je početkom 1990-ih čak četvrtina mladih deklarirala svoje članstvo u nekoj političkoj stranci danas se njihova stranačka pripadnost stabilizirala na 5%, za razliku od 9% starijih koji tvrde da su članovi stranaka (Ilišin, 1999; 2002; 2005). Ipak, najporazniji su podaci o zastupljenosti mladih u tijelima vlasti na nacionalnoj razini. Nije neočekivano da ni u jednoj vladi u Hrvatskoj od 1990. do danas nije bilo nikoga mlađeg od 30 godina, ali je manje očekivano da je njihova zastupljenost i u Hrvatskom saboru, kao predstavničkom tijelu, bila minorna. Analize zastupljenosti mladih u nacionalnom parlamentu u dosadašnjih pet mandata (Ilišin, 2003; 2005) pokazuju da se njihova zastupljenost kretala od potpunog izostanka (u prvom sazivu) do najviših 2,6% (u četvrtom sazivu), a što njihovu prosječnu zastupljenost u Hrvatskom saboru u tranzicijskom razdoblju nivelira na 1,7%. Navedeni podaci govore o izrazitoj podzastupljenosti mladih, koji inače čine cca 21% biračkog tijela Hrvatske, kao što ukazuju i na promjene u usporedbi s posljednja dva desetljeća socijalističkog režima kada je u Saboru RH prosječno bilo 7% mladih (Ilišin, 1999). Također je relevantan podatak da su mladi saborski zastupnici od 1992. do danas došli samo iz redova tri stranke (SDP-a, HDZ-a i jednom slučaju HSS-a). Time se pokazuje da je od preko 30 stranaka koje su do sada prošle kroz hrvatski parlament, manje od desetine njih demonstriralo spremnost da poklone povjerenje svojim najmlađim članovima na način da ih postave na dovoljno izgledna mjesta na stranačkim listama u parlamentarnim izborima.

Prethodne egzaktno podatke o političkoj participaciji mladih u očekivanom smjeru dopunjuju i nalazi istraživanja o njihovu subjektivnom doživljaju politike, a koji u velikoj mjeri korespondira s razmišljanjima njihovih europskih vršnjaka. Svakako treba naglasiti da su mladi u Hrvatskoj svjesni vlastite političke marginaliziranosti, a što ilustriraju podaci iz istraživanja hrvatske omladine provedenih 1999. i 2004. godine (Ilišin, 2002; 2005). Naime, rezultati pokazuju da, u usporedbi sa ženama i nacionalnim manjinama, mladi vlastitu generaciju doživljavaju kao skupinu koja je u najnepovoljnijoj političkoj poziciji pri čemu ih tri četvrtine smatra da mladi nisu dovoljno zastupljeni u hrvatskom političkom životu, a tek nešto manje ih drži da je potrebno zakonski osigurati političko predstavništvo mladih u Saboru. Razloge vlastite političke marginaliziranost mladi prepoznaju i kao generacijski i kao društveno uvjetovane. Tako s jedne strane, dio mladih smatra da su njihovi vršnjaci kritički distancirani od politike (na što upućuju stavovi da je politika nepoštena, pa

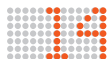


se zato mladi ne žele angažirati, da se politički akteri ne bave problemima koje mladi smatraju važnima, te da su njihovi vršnjaci previše zaokupljeni egzistencijalnim problemima da bi se mogli aktivno baviti politikom), a s druge strane, dio mladih drži da su njihovi vršnjaci nekompetentni i nezainteresirani (drugim riječima, misle da je politika dosadna, te da mladi nisu dovoljno iskusni i osposobljeni za bavljenje politikom, zbog čega je prirodno da se samo stariji bave njome). Očito je, dakle, da mladi dio krivnje adresiraju na vlastitu generaciju, ali više zagovornika imaju stavovi koji krivnju delegiraju na društvo koje mladima ne poklanja dovoljno povjerenja. Stoga ne iznenađuju podaci da povjerenje u najviše institucije vlasti (Sabor, Vladu i predsjednika Republike) među mladima varira od 21 do 50%.

Imajući na umu navedene tendencije, očekivano je da je interes mladih za politiku - koji je ionako trajno na začelju ljestvice njihovih interesa - u tranzicijskom razdoblju izrazito opao: dok je u posljednjoj dekadi socijalističkog razdoblja tek četvrtina mladih bila potpuno nezainteresirana za politiku u tranzicijskom se razdoblju njihov broj udvostručio. Takve promjene u političkoj (ne)zainteresiranosti mladih upućuju na to da legalno obogaćenje ponude ideološko-političkih opcija na političkoj sceni nije pridobilo mlade za politiku, nego ih je još više odbilo od nje - možda upravo zbog nove zatvorenosti koja se pojavila s pojavom kompetitivne politike i izbora. Druga važna implikacija slabljenja interesa za politiku ogleda se u tome da to zasigurno pridonosi samomarginalizaciji mladih, što njihovu političku isključenost dodatno petrificira.

O nekim aspektima odnosa društva spram mladih svjedočila je i hrvatska stranačka elita u istraživanju o stavovima političara o društvenom i političkom položaju mladih (Ilišin, 1999). Hrvatski su se političari složili s tezom da mladi nisu adekvatno zastupljeni u hrvatskoj politici, a većina ih je na upit zašto nema više mladih u tijelima vlasti odgovorila da stariji naprosto ne žele mladima prepustiti svoja mjesta, osobito na kandidacijskim listama u izborima. Objasnili su da u strankama funkcionira načelo senioriteta i stranačkih zasluga, pa u borbi za mjesta u vlasti prednost imaju razmjerno stariji aktivisti koji već duže vrijeme rade za dobrobit stranke u lokalnim sredinama ili na nacionalnoj razini. Istodobno, međugeneracijske odnose u vlastitim strankama percipirali su kao dobre, a na društvenoj razini nisu identificirali pojave koje bi potencijalno mogle voditi sukobu generacija jer su procijenili da je hrvatsko društvo sredinom 1990-ih bilo opterećeno znatno većim problemima koji eventualna generacijska neslaganja nužno potiskuju u drugi plan.

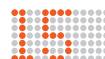
U takvom viđenju međugeneracijskih odnosa u suvremenoj Hrvatskoj političari su prilično suglasni mišljenjima mladih. Naime, u već spominjanim istraživanjima ustanovljeno je da od svih društvenih nejednakosti - primjerice, socioklasnih, sociokulturnih, obrazovnih, političkih, nacionalnih, spolnih i vjerskih - generacijske



nejednakosti mladi vide kao najmanje izražene (Ilišin, 2002; 2005). Empirijski podaci pokazuju da od trećine do dvije petine mladih smatra da je društveni položaj njihove generacije lošiji nego položaj starijih, a kako je već pokazano da ih tri četvrtine drži da su mladi politički marginalizirani, čini se da vlastiti politički status uglavnom ne smatraju integralnim dijelom ukupnog generacijskog društvenog statusa. Takvom zanemarivanju važnosti vlastitog političkog položaja inherentno je prihvaćanje društveno raširenog paternalističkog odnosa spram mladih, a čiji je sastavni dio zahtjev ili bar očekivanje da se mladi ne trebaju angažirati u važnim i odgovornim društvenim poslovima kao što je, na primjer, donošenje političkih odluka.

Na osnovi prethodno prezentiranih nalaza o političkim stavovima i političkoj participaciji mladih u Hrvatskoj realno je pretpostaviti da je i u lokalnoj politici njihova participacija ispodprosječna. Do sada takvi podaci nisu sustavno prikupljeni ni analizirani jer je pozornost analitičara primarno bila usmjerena na nacionalne političke institucije i procese. Dva su osnovna razloga tomu: prihvaćanje uvriježenog poimanja lokalne politike kao drugorazredne teme u odnosu na nacionalnu politiku te činjenica da su se nakon uspostave Hrvatske kao samostalne države tek za lokalne izbore 2001. godine stekli uvjeti za njihovo provođenje na cijelom teritoriju zemlje i pod isključivom ingerencijom hrvatske državne vlasti (Kasapović, 2004:83). Otuda su politički akteri i procesi na lokalnoj razini pobuđivali veći interes analitičara i šire javnosti tek zahvaljujući ekscesnim zbivanjima u nekim jedinicama lokalne samouprave, a koja su ujedno imala i dalekosežnije političke implikacije.

Oslanjajući se na analizu M. Kasapović (2004) ovdje valja upozoriti na nekoliko značajki političkih procesa na lokalnoj razini. Za početak treba reći da su lokalni izbori - a koji su nezaobilazan demokratski preduvjet uspostavljanja lokalnih tijela vlasti - hijerarhijski podređeni nacionalnim izborima pri čemu ih karakterizira manji odaziv birača. To se pokazalo i u Hrvatskoj gdje je prosječan odaziv birača na parlamentarne izbore tijekom tranzicijskog razdoblja bio cca 73% - a što je više od drugih tranzicijskih zemalja i manje od europskih zemalja s duljom demokratskom tradicijom (Šiber, 2005:88) - dok je, primjerice, u lokalnim izborima 2001. godine prosječan izlazak birača bio 47% (Kasapović, 2004: 88). Manja zainteresiranost građana za lokalne izbore dovodi se u vezu s njihovom percepcijom malog utjecaja lokalnih tijela vlasti na nacionalnu politiku, prosudbom da su lokalne izborne teme uvelike odraz tema na nacionalnoj razini te manjim povjerenjem u lokalne političke aktere i institucije. Osim toga, smatra se da na političko ponašanje birača presudno utječe njihova stranačka identifikacija zbog čega su i lokalni izbori prije svega glasovanje za političke stranke. Otuda se lokalni izbori i konstituiranje tijela vlasti mogu promatrati kao "refleks" nacionalnih izbora i političkih procesa. Unatoč tomu, različit stupanj političke mobilizacije i participacije građana često rezultira i različitim

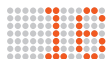


rezultatima nacionalnih i lokalnih izbora. Pritom se nerijetko događa da političke stranke koje su pobijedile u parlamentarnim izborima na lokalnim izborima polučuju lošije rezultate, a što se u pravilu tumači kao provjera potpore građana nacionalnoj vladi tijekom njezina mandata.

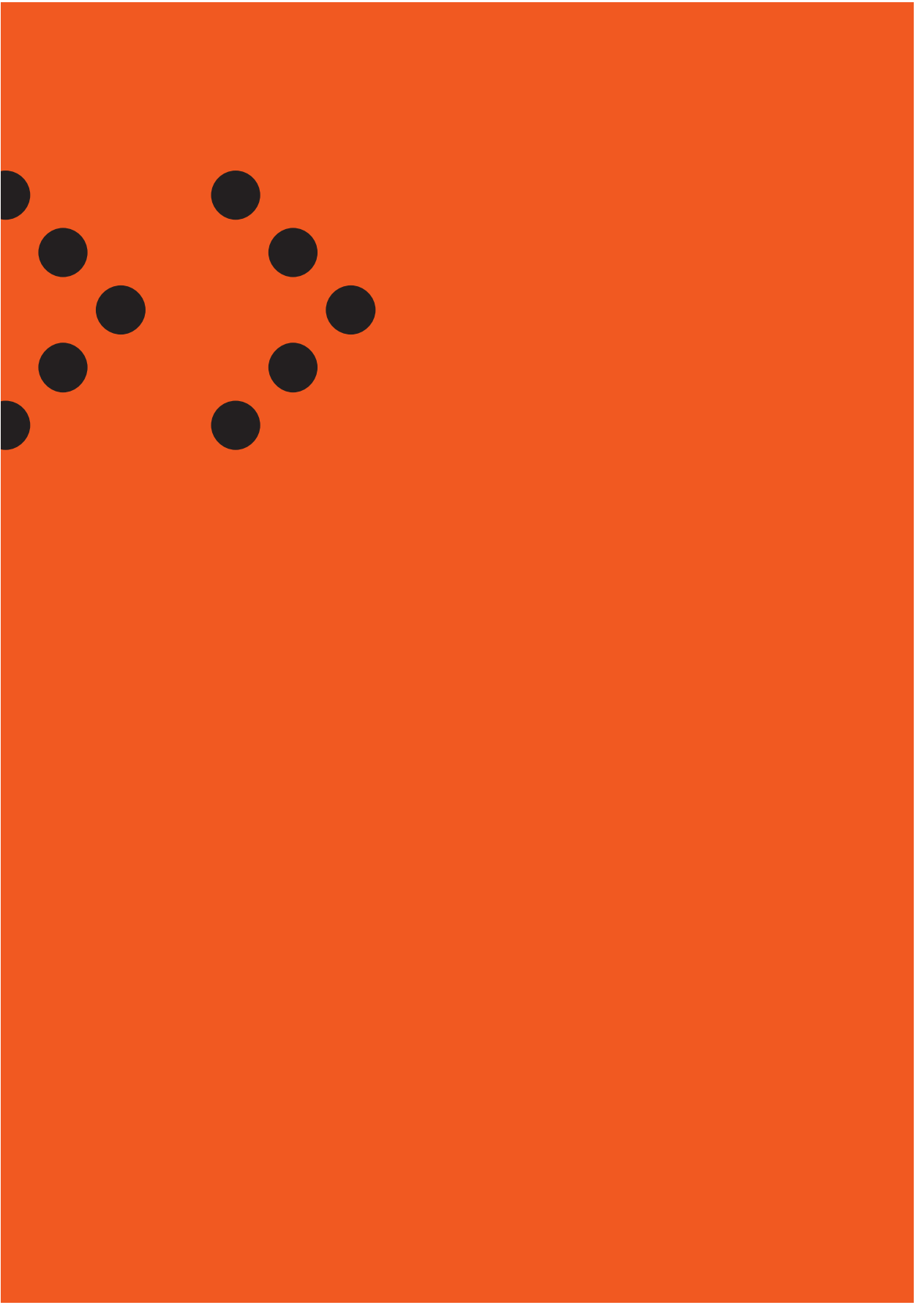
S druge strane, lokalni se izbori promatraju kao “samosvojni politički procesi” u kojima ponašanje birača nije primarno uvjetovano stranačkom identifikacijom jer znatan utjecaj imaju problemske orijentacije i percepcija kandidata koji se natječu u lokalnim izborima. U tim izborima veće izglede na uspjeh imaju manje stranke i nezavisne liste i kandidati čemu pogoduju lakši uvjeti kandidiranja, zasićenost elektorata etabliranim nacionalnim strankama i veća spremnost birača da politički eksperimentiraju u manje rizičnim, “sporednim”, izborima.

M. Kasapović zaključuje da su se lokalni izbori u Hrvatskoj - koji se provode po istim izbornim pravilima kao i nacionalni izbori - dijelom potvrdili kao odraz nacionalnih izbora, a dijelom kao samosvojan politički proces. Podudarnost s političkim procesima na nacionalnoj razini ogleda se u naglašenoj identifikaciji birača s nacionalno etabliranim političkim strankama i širenju koalicijskih aranžmana pri uspostavljanju tijela izvršne vlasti na lokalnim razinama koja su često formirana po uzoru na nacionalnu vladu. Samosvojnost lokalnih političkih procesa iščitava se, pak, iz slabije političke participacije birača te većeg prodora političkih aktera, koji ne pripadaju etabliranim strankama, u lokalni izborni proces i tijela vlasti.

Naša analiza, iako primarno usmjerena na propitivanje statusa mladih u tijelima lokalne vlasti, trebala bi pokazati jesu li neki od naznačenih trendova prisutni i nakon posljednjih lokalnih izbora. Otuda se u kontekstu istraživanja zastupljenosti mladih u tijelima lokalne vlasti u Hrvatskoj postavlja i pitanje jesu li lokalni politički akteri i birači skloniji političkom eksperimentiranju pri kreiranju izbornih lista i glasanju u lokalnim izborima na način da veće povjerenje poklone mladima kao politički marginalnoj skupini. U tom tipu analize mladima se pridružuju i žene kao također politički marginalizirana skupina pri čemu je vrlo važno pitanje političke participacije mladih žena. Analiza odabranih sociostrukturnih značajki lokalnih tijela vlasti važna je i zbog poznate tendencije da se glavnina političke elite na nacionalnoj razini, osim iz redova stranačkih dužnosnika i zaslužnih članova, regrutira i iz redova političara koji su stekli prethodno iskustvo u lokalnoj politici. Stoga analiza nekih sociostrukturnih značajki lokalnih tijela vlasti omogućuje uvid u jedan od najvažnijih resursa iz kojeg se selekcioniра nacionalna politička elita, kao što posredno daje i uvid u neke kriterije selekcije koju stranke prakticiraju. Gledano iz rakursa mladih, njihova zastupljenost u lokalnim tijelima vlasti važan je indikator i potencijalne generacijske političke moći u lokalnim zajednicama, a koja bi im trebala omogućiti da bar neke specifične interese i potrebe realiziraju u sredinama u kojima žive.







02 Metodologija istraživanja

» **OSNOVNI CILJ OVOGA ISTRAŽIVANJA** bio je ustanoviti kakva je zastupljenost mladih u tijelima lokalne vlasti u Republici Hrvatskoj te koja je njihova stranačka pripadnost i kakva su njihova temeljna sociostrukturalna obilježja. U svrhu utvrđivanja tih značajki ispitana su stranačka pripadnost i neka sociostrukturalna obilježja svih članova tijela lokalne vlasti te zasebno podskupine mladih dužnosnika. Kao *mladi* članovi tijela vlasti definirani su svi oni koji su u dobi od navršene 18. do navršene 29. godine života, a u skladu s određenjem koje je eksplicirano u Nacionalnom programu djelovanja za mlade (2003:11).

Uzorak istraživanja činila su tijela izvršne i predstavničke vlasti u 21 županiji - uključujući i grad Zagreb, koji ima status županije - te u 123 grada u Hrvatskoj koja su formirana nakon lokalnih izbora održanih u svibnju 2005. godine. Uzorak tijela lokalne vlasti reduciran je na regionalnu i gradsku razinu, jer je to prvo istraživanje koje se bavi sociostrukturnim značajkama lokalne vlasti i u toj bi situaciji bilo teško provedivo da se obuhvate sve jedinice lokalne samouprave. Naime, u Hrvatskoj postoji još 426 općina s odgovarajućim tijelima vlasti, a što bi enormno produžilo trajanje istraživanja. Pritom smo pretpostavili da će podaci prikupljeni u gradovima i županijama biti dostatni za ostvarivanje valjanog uvida u postojeće strukturne trendove.

Instrument za prikupljanje podataka bio je razmjerno kratak upitnik. Upitnici su zasebno popunjavani za poglavarstva županija i gradova te za županijske skupštine i gradska vijeća. Upitnik je sadržavao 11 pitanja:

- vrsta i razina tijela vlasti;
- broj članova tijela vlasti;
- broj predstavnika političkih stranaka u tijelu vlasti;
- broj žena u tijelu vlasti;
- stupanj obrazovanja članova tijela vlasti;
- broj mladih članova u tijelu vlasti;
- dobna struktura mladih članova tijela vlasti;



- broj žena među mladim članovima tijela vlasti;
- broj mladih predstavnika političkih stranaka u tijelu vlasti;
- stupanj obrazovanja mladih članova tijela vlasti;
- socioprofesionalni status mladih članova tijela vlasti.

Upitnik su popunjavale stručne službe u tijelima lokalne vlasti. U njih su unošeni agregirani podaci za svako tijelo vlasti ponaosob. Drugim riječima, nisu prikupljani podaci na individualnoj razini, tj. za svakog člana tijela vlasti zasebno, nego su na osnovi raspoloživih podataka o svakom članu oni agregirani i sistematizirani na zahtijevani način te uneseni u upitnik.

Prikupljanje podataka trajalo je od studenog 2005. do siječnja 2006. godine. Razmjerno dugo trajanje te faze istraživanja posljedica je nepostojanja - osim u rijetkim slučajevima - javno dostupnih i sređenih podataka o osnovnim strukturnim značajkama tijela vlasti u većini ispitivanih jedinica lokalne samouprave. Kako je to vrlo znakovito, ova analiza sadrži i prilog o teškoćama i specifičnostima s kojima su se suradnici susretali tijekom procesa prikupljanja podataka.

Obrada podataka obavljena je na ukupno 283 upitnika, odnosno za toliki broj tijela lokalne vlasti, pri čemu tijelo vlasti predstavlja jedinicu analize. Za 100% obuhvat planiranog uzorka nedostaju podaci za poglavarstvo i gradsko vijeće jednog grada (Hrvatska Kostajnica), gdje tijela vlasti nisu konstituirana, pa njihove funkcije do provođenja ponovljenih lokalnih izbora obavlja povjerenik Vlade RH. U tri mala otočna grada s manje od 3000 stanovnika (Stari Grad, Vis, Komiža) poglavarstva nisu konstituirana, već su njihove funkcije u nadležnosti gradskih vijeća. Prikupljeni su podaci sistematizirani u četiri osnovne podskupine sastavljene od:

1. 21 županijske skupštine
2. 21 županijskog poglavarstva
3. 122 gradska vijeća
4. 119 gradskih poglavarstava.



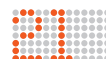
Analizirana tijela vlasti različitih su veličina: županijske skupštine broje od 41 do 52 člana (prosječno 44), županijska poglavarstva od 10 do 13 članova (prosječno 12), gradska vijeća od 11 do 35 članova (prosječno 18), a gradska poglavarstva od 3 do 9 članova (prosječno 6). Ukupan broj članova u obuhvaćenim tijelima vlasti iznosi 4125. Neki dužnosnici još nisu bili imenovani u vrijeme prikupljanja podataka, pa bi s njima navedeni broj bio nešto veći, no riječ je o statistički zanemarivom broju.

Dobiveni podaci analizirani su po vrsti (izvršna ili predstavnička) i razini vlasti (županija ili grad). Analiza je obavljena za ukupan broj članova tijela lokalne vlasti te zasebno za mlade predstavnike u tim tijelima.

Kako veličina (broj članova) grupiranih tijela vlasti utječe na ukupne rezultate, u tablici 1 dajemo skupni pregled broja članova po vrstama i razinama tijela vlasti.

**TABLICA 1: BROJ ČLANOVA PO VRSTI
I RAZINI TIJELA LOKALNE VLASTI U
HRVATSKOJ 2005.**

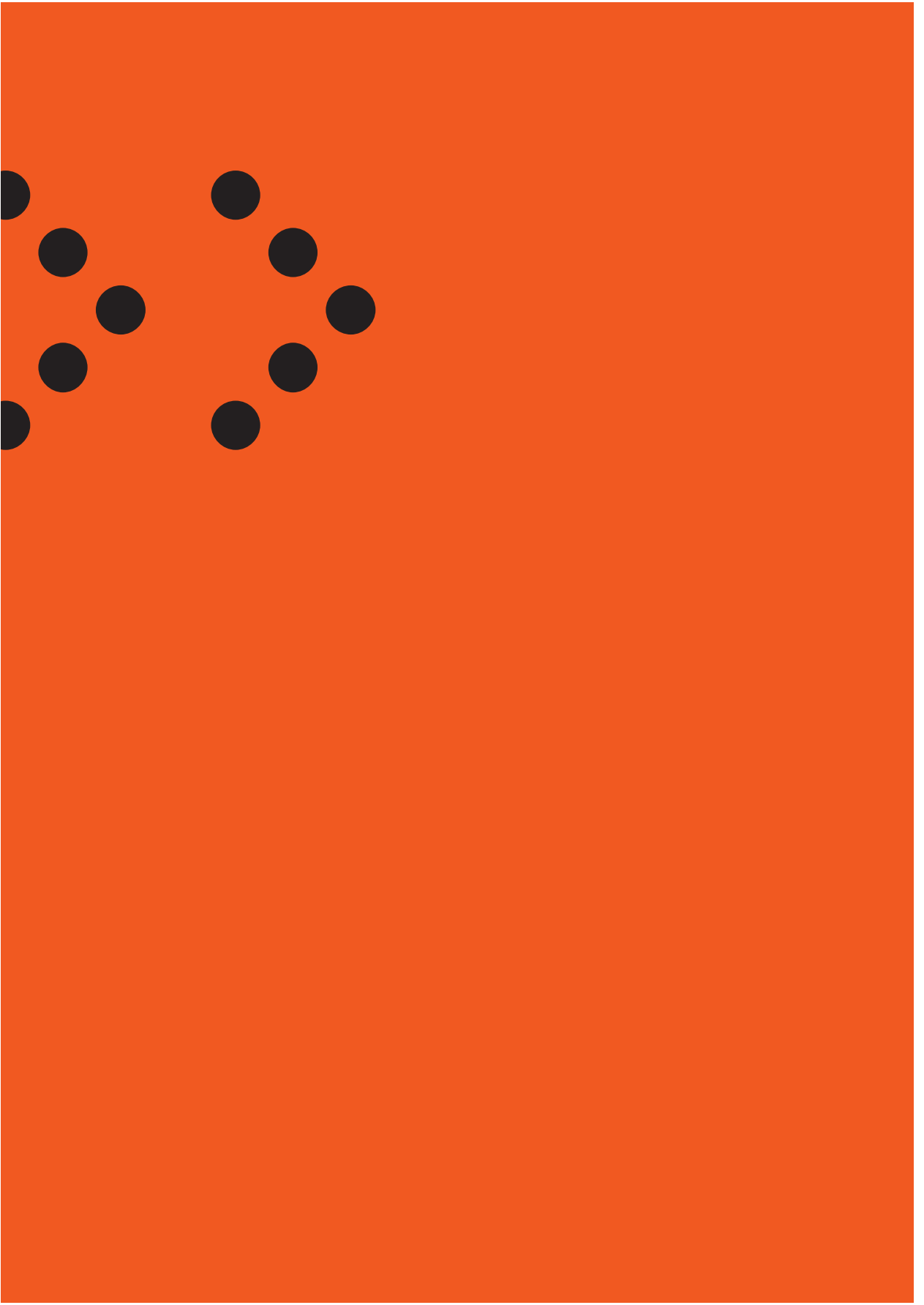
Tijela vlasti (vrsta i razina)	Broj članova	
	f	%
Županijske skupštine	933	22,6
Županijska poglavarstva	263	6,4
Gradska vijeća	2172	52,7
Gradska poglavarstva	757	18,3
Predstavnička vlast - ukupno	3195	75,3
Izvršna vlast - ukupno	1020	24,7
Regionalna razina - ukupno	1196	29,0
Gradska razina - ukupno	2929	71,0
Hrvatska - ukupno	4125	100,0



Kao što se iz tablice 1 jasno vidi, najbrojnija pojedinačna skupina su gradski vijećnici, kao što u ukupnom broju lokalnih dužnosnika dominiraju članovi tijela predstavničke vlasti te članovi tijela vlasti na gradskoj razini. Kako u pravilu predstavnička tijela sadrže veći broj članova od izvršnih, kao i što gradova ima puno više od županija (bez obzira na to što su županijska tijela vlasti redovito brojčano veća od gradskih), ovi su rezultati posve očekivani. Iz rečenoga slijedi da su ukupni rezultati istraživanja o strukturi tijela lokalne vlasti poglavito određeni strukturom predstavničkih tijela i to onih na gradskoj razini.







03 Stranačka i socijalna struktura tijela lokalne vlasti

➤ **POSLEDNJI PARLAMENTARNI IZBORI U HRVATSKOJ** održani su u studenom 2003. godine. Relativnu većinu osvojio je HDZ te je uz potporu još nekoliko manjih parlamentarnih stranaka formirao koalicijsku vladu u kojoj ima dominantnu ulogu. Godinu i pol kasnije održani su lokalni izbori, pa je zanimljivo vidjeti kakve su rezultate ostvarile parlamentarne stranke, kao i postoje li na lokalnoj razini neke razlike u strukturi političkih grupacija koje su uspjele ući u tijela lokalne vlasti. U kontekstu našeg istraživanja važno je znati stranačku strukturu kako bi se u kasnijoj analizi moglo ustanoviti koje su se političke stranke i grupacije pokazale najspremnijima dati šansu svojim mladim članovima.

U tablici 2 prikazana je stranačka struktura u promatranim tijelima lokalne vlasti uz dodatak podataka o stranačkom sastavu petog saziva Hrvatskog sabora u trenutku njegova konstituiranja koncem 2003. godine.

TABLICA 2: STRANAČKA STRUKTURA TIJELA LOKALNE VLASTI U

➤ **HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

Tijela vlasti	HDZ	SDP	HSS	HNS	HSP	HSLS	HSU	IDS	Ost.	Nez.
Županijske skupštine	29,3	18,7	11,9	8,2	8,3	4,9	4,1	2,4	10,3	2,1
Županijska poglavarstva	28,9	14,1	9,9	9,5	12,2	5,7	4,9	3,4	9,5	1,9
Gradska vijeća	30,0	16,0	8,7	7,8	5,7	4,7	3,8	4,2	8,6	10,5
Gradska poglavarstva	31,6	15,7	5,8	7,5	5,7	5,2	3,6	4,6	7,4	15,7
Predstavnička vlast	29,8	16,8	9,7	7,9	6,5	4,8	3,9	3,7	9,1	8,0
Izvršna vlast	30,9	13,2	6,9	8,0	7,4	5,3	3,9	4,3	7,9	12,2
Regionalna razina	29,2	17,6	11,5	8,4	9,1	5,1	4,3	2,6	10,1	0,8
Gradska razina	30,4	15,2	8,0	7,7	5,7	4,8	3,7	4,3	8,3	11,8
Hrvatska - ukupno	30,1	15,9	9,0	7,9	6,7	4,9	3,9	3,8	8,7	9,1
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	43,4	19,1	7,2	6,6	4,6	1,3	2,0	2,6	7,3	5,9

Legenda: Ost.: ostale stranke; Nez.: nezavisne liste i kandidati



Iz tablice 2 vidljivo je da je pet najjačih stranaka u Saboru ostalo u istom odnosu snaga i nakon lokalnih izbora. No, dvije najjače stranke - HDZ i SDP - na lokalnim su izborima osvojile proporcionalno manje mandata, a HNS, HSS i HSP i manje parlamentarne stranke bile su nešto uspješnije nego na parlamentarnim izborima. Njima se, očekivano, priključuju i nezavisne liste i kandidati te veći broj malih stranaka. Tako u Saboru trenutno ima 5,9% nezavisnih zastupnika, koji su u parlament ušli što sa stranačkih lista što kao predstavnici nacionalnih manjina, a u njemu sjede zastupnici koji dolaze iz ukupno 14 stranaka. Istodobno, u tijelima lokalne vlasti, ne računajući nezavisne liste i kandidate, izabrani su predstavnici 42 stranke - to je tri puta više nego na nacionalnoj razini, iako još uvijek obuhvaća tek dvije petine od 103 registrirane političke stranke u Republici Hrvatskoj. Ovi podaci govore da su birači bili spremniji na eksperimentiranje u lokalnim izborima što je rezultiralo pluralnijom stranačkom scenom na lokalnoj razini nego što je to slučaj na državnoj.

U tablici 3 skupno je prikazana spolna i obrazovna struktura dužnosnika izabranih u tijela lokalne vlasti, te uspoređena s istovrsnim pokazateljima u Saboru.

**TABLICA 3: SPOLNA I OBRAZOVNA
STRUKTURA TIJELA LOKALNE VLASTI
U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

Tijela vlasti	Spol		Stupanj obrazovanja								
	Žene	Muš.	OŠ	SSS-3	SSS-4	VŠS	VSS	Mr.	Dr.	Nep.	
Županijske skupštine	17,7	82,3	0,8	2,7	29,1	15,1	33,2	4,1	2,4	12,6	
Županijska poglavarstva	16,7	83,3	0,8	0,8	14,0	10,3	62,4	5,3	2,3	4,1	
Gradska vijeća	17,4	82,6	1,4	5,7	36,6	13,2	31,8	2,1	1,8	7,5	
Gradska poglavarstva	13,3	86,7	0,1	0,7	21,4	18,1	50,8	4,8	1,8	2,3	
Predstavnička vlast	17,5	82,5	1,2	4,8	34,3	13,8	32,2	2,7	1,9	9,0	
Izvršna vlast	14,2	85,8	0,3	0,7	19,5	16,1	53,8	4,9	2,0	2,7	
Regionalna razina	17,5	82,5	0,7	2,3	25,8	14,1	39,6	4,4	2,3	10,8	
Gradska razina	16,3	83,7	1,1	4,4	32,7	14,5	36,7	2,8	1,7	6,1	
Hrvatska - ukupno	16,3	83,7	0,9	3,8	30,7	14,4	37,6	3,2	1,9	7,5	
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	17,8	82,2	0,0	1,3	11,2	9,2	51,3	9,9	17,1	0,0	

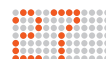
Legenda: Muš.: muškarci; OŠ: osnovna škola; SSS-3: trogodišnja srednja škola; SSS-4: četverogodišnja srednja škola; VŠS: viša stručna sprema; VSS: visoka stručna sprema (fakultet); Mr.: magistar znanosti; Dr.: doktor znanosti; Nep.: nepoznato.



Zanimljivo je da je zastupljenost žena među političkim dužnosnicima na nacionalnoj i ukupnoj lokalnoj razini gotovo izjednačena. Iz toga slijedi da ženama ulazak u lokalnu politiku nije olakšan onoliko koliko bi se načelno trebalo očekivati, ali zacijelo i same žene iskazuju manje spremnosti da se uključe u rad lokalnih centara moći. Ako se spolna struktura pogleda po pojedinim tipovima tijela, podaci nisu iznenađujući - žene su primjetno manje zastupljene u izvršnoj vlasti, osobito kada je riječ o gradskim poglavarstvima (usporedbe radi, u aktualnoj Vladi ih je dvostruko više, tj. 26,7%). Razlog uočenim trendovima može biti snažniji pritisak patrijarhalnog modela rodних odnosa u lokalnim sredinama, koji destimulira javno djelovanje žena jer i stranke, i same žene, i birače odvraća od većeg uključivanja žena u lokalne izborne procese. Podjednaka zastupljenost žena na lokalnoj i nacionalnoj razini problematična je utoliko što se na taj način sužava resurs iz kojega se mogu regrutirati već politički iskusne žene za adekvatnu participaciju u nacionalnoj politici. S druge strane, ujednačena zastupljenost žena na svim razinama vlasti može se protumačiti i kao indikator šireg prihvaćanja ideje o ravnopravnosti spolova - to je još daleko od ostvarenja, ali očito je podjednako prihvaćeno u nacionalnim i lokalnim stranačkim elitama koje sastavljaju izborne liste.

S druge strane, znatna je razlika u obrazovnoj strukturi državne i lokalne vlasti. Dok su svi članovi Vlade RH akademski obrazovani, a gotovo 90% saborskih zastupnika ima neki stupanj akademskog obrazovanja, takvih je među lokalnim dužnosnicima nešto preko 50%. Osobito upada u oči da stručne službe nemaju podataka o stupnju obrazovanja za 7,5% lokalnih dužnosnika, što upućuje na zaključak kako je osobno obrazovanje u lokalnoj politici manje važno, jer se vjerojatno razmjerno uspješno kompenzira osobnim i obiteljskim ugledom i vezama, materijalnim bogatstvom, uključenošću u mrežu lokalnih inicijativa i interesa i slično. Ipak, još uvijek su članovi lokalne vlasti natprosječno obrazovani u usporedbi s građanima Hrvatske, starijima od 25 godina, među kojima akademski obrazovanih ima oko 15% (Ilišin, Mendeš, Potočnik, 2003:62).

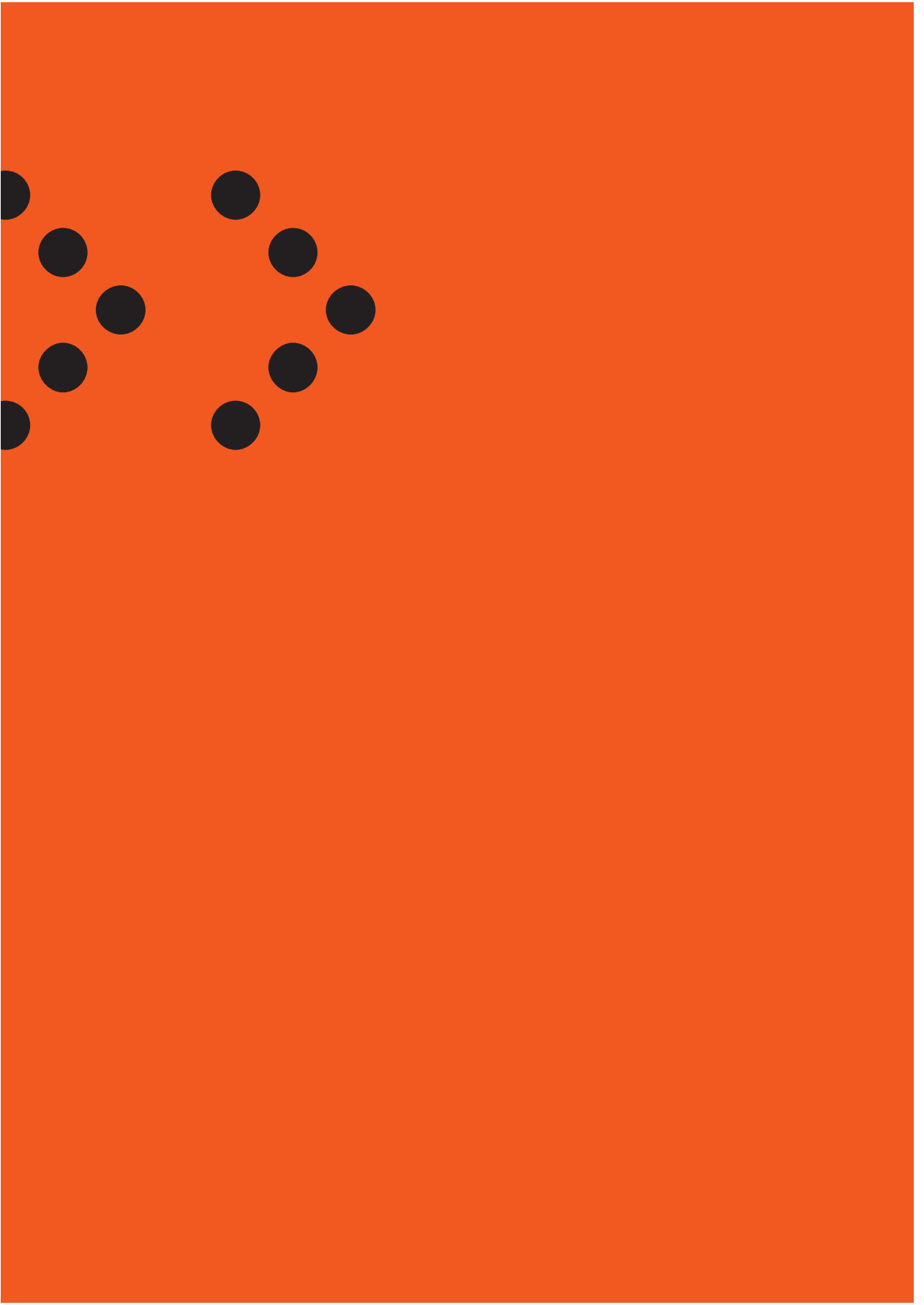
Potpuno je očekivano da akademski obrazovani dužnosnici prevladavaju u tijelima izvršne vlasti (i to osobito u županijskim poglavarstvima), kao i to da broj obrazovanih dužnosnika raste s razinom vlasti, zbog čega su članovi regionalnih tijela vlasti prosječno obrazovaniji od kolega iz gradskih tijela vlasti. Politička egzekutiva po prirodi stvari zahtijeva stručnjake za razna područja, jer se donose operativne odluke, pa je logično da se poglavarstva nastoje popuniti visokoobrazovanim članovima. Veća koncentracija fakultetski obrazovanih dužnosnika na regionalnoj razini vjerojatno je indikator stranačke selekcije karakterizirane postavljanjem nešto strožih kriterija za određivanje kandidata za više razine vlasti. Naime, na



regionalnoj razini neke od personalnih osobina dostatnih na lokalnoj razini zacijelo više nisu funkcionalne, pa na važnosti dobivaju objektivizirani pokazatelji osobne kompetencije.







04 Mladi u tijelima lokalne vlasti: zastupljenost i sociostrukturalna obilježja

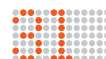
- **PRETHODNI UVIDI NAZNAČUJU** politički i sociostrukturni kontekst unutar kojeg treba promatrati i interpretirati zastupljenost te osnovna politička i socijalna obilježja mladih dužnosnika u lokalnoj vlasti. Pritom se polazi od pretpostavke da su mladi ispodprosječno zastupljeni u lokalnoj politici te da se po svojim socijalnim obilježjima razlikuju od starijih dužnosnika.

4.1. Zastupljenost i politička pripadnost mladih dužnosnika

U tablici 4 prikazani su agregirani podaci o zastupljenosti mladih u tijelima lokalne vlasti i disperziranost njihove zastupljenosti.

TABLICA 4: ZASTUPLJENOST MLADIH U TIJELIMA LOKALNE VLASTI U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)

Tijela vlasti	Zastupljenost mladih		Broj tijela vlasti s mladim članovima	
	f	%	F	%
Županijske skupštine	57	6,1	21	100,0
Županijska poglavarstva	11	4,2	8	38,1
Gradska vijeća	163	7,5	81	66,4
Gradska poglavarstva	29	3,8	25	21,0
Predstavnička vlast	220	7,1	102	71,3
Izvršna vlast	40	3,9	33	23,6
Regionalna razina	68	5,7	29	69,0
Gradska razina	192	6,6	106	44,0
Hrvatska - ukupno	260	6,3	135	47,7
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	3	2,0		



Kao što se vidi, u svim tijelima lokalne vlasti u Hrvatskoj mladih ima 6,3%, što je tri puta više nego u nacionalnom parlamentu, no još uvijek znatno manje nego što ih ima u hrvatskom elektoratu (gotovo četiri puta). Dakako, mladi su znatno prisutniji u predstavničkoj nego izvršnoj vlasti - od svih mladih dužnosnika, njih je 84,6% u predstavničkoj, a 15,4% u izvršnoj vlasti (za razliku od četvrtine koliko na ukupnoj razini zauzimaju svi lokalni dužnosnici u tijelima izvršne vlasti). Zanimljivo je da su im gradska vijeća najpristupačnija, a gradska poglavarstva najviše zatvorena. Ako, pak, izuzmemo tijela vlasti u kojima mladih uopće nema, njihova se brojnost u pojedinačnim slučajevima kreće od 1 do 7 u predstavničkim tijelima, a od 1 do 3 u egzekutivi.

Koliko je raširena zastupljenost mladih pokazuju podaci o broju tijela lokalne vlasti u kojima ima, odnosno uopće nema nijednog mladog dužnosnika. Zanimljivo je da su regionalna tijela u tom pogledu otvorenija za mlade, što ukazuje na to da su stranke spremnije kandidirati mlade na županijskim izbornim listama. Tako u svakoj županijskoj skupštini sjedi bar jedan mladi član, dok je broj gradskih poglavarstava a zatim i gradskih vijeća u kojima ima mladih ispod prosjeka. Na osnovi poznate tendencije da su marginalnim skupinama dostupnija manje atraktivna i odgovorna mjesta potonji bi se podaci mogli protumačiti kao pokazatelj tendencije da se u političkim strankama (a vjerojatno i među biračima) regionalna vlast - premda hijerarhijski viša - percipira manje važnom. Uostalom, nadležnosti gradske i županijske vlasti razlikuju se, i građani više i neposrednije osjećaju posljedice odluka gradskih nego županijskih vlasti. No, za činjenicu da u, primjerice, trećini gradskih vijeća nema nijednog mladog vijećnika odgovornost ne snose samo lokalne stranačke elite, a još manje birači, nego dobrim dijelom i sami mladi, odnosno podmladci političkih stranaka. Naime, logično je pretpostaviti da se u određenim lokalnim sredinama i pojedinim stranačkim ograncima mladi, koji su okupljeni u političkim podmladcima, nisu uspjeli nametnuti svojim radom i izboriti se za izgledna mjesta na izbornim listama, a što im je u startu zatvorilo put u tijela predstavničke vlasti.

U uvodu je rečeno da se kao mladi dužnosnici promatraju svi oni u dobi od napunjenih 18 do 29 godina života. Dobiveni rezultati pokazali su da se raspon dobi mladih dužnosnika kreće od 20 do 29 godina, pa su oni razvrstani u dvije dobne kohorte (tablica 5).



**TABLICA 5: DOBNA STRUKTURA
MLADIH U TIJELIMA LOKALNE
VLASTI U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

Tijela vlasti	Dobne kohorte				Prosječna dob (u godinama)
	20-24 god		25-29 god.		
	f	%	f	%	
Županijske skupštine	15	26,3	42	73,7	25,7
Županijska poglavarstva	2	18,2	9	81,8	27,6
Gradska vijeća	31	19,0	132	81,0	26,5
Gradska poglavarstva	1	3,4	28	96,6	27,3
Predstavnička vlast	46	20,9	174	79,1	26,1
Izvršna vlast	3	7,5	37	92,5	27,4
Regionalna razina	17	25,0	51	75,0	26,6
Gradska razina	32	17,6	160	82,4	26,9
Hrvatska - ukupno	49	18,8	211	81,2	26,5
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	0	0,0	3	100,0	27,3

U tablici 5 odmah se uočava izrazita dominacija starije podskupine mladih dužnosnika. Dapače, kada se zastupljenost mladih promatra iz rakursa dobnih kohorti, pokazuje se kako u svim tijelima lokalnih vlasti ima 1,2% mladih dužnosnika u dobi do 24. godine, a 5,1% onih u dobi 25 do 29 godina života. Drugim riječima, kada bi se za određenje mladih koristila dobna granica do 25 godina (što je slučaj u većini službenih statistika u Hrvatskoj i svijetu), pokazalo bi se da su mladi u lokalnoj politici tek simbolički prisutni, a u nacionalnoj ni toliko. Podaci jasno pokazuju kako i političke stranke i birači preferiraju mlade koji su već dovoljno socijalno “zreli” i osposobljeni da preuzmu neke trajne društvene uloge, a što ih potom kvalificira i za ulazak u svijet tradicionalne politike.

Ponovo se pokazuje da su regionalna tijela vlasti (i to posebice županijske skupštine) najpristupačnija, jer je u njima proporcionalno najviše najmlađih dužnosnika. O tome govori i prosječna dob mladih, a koja se inače kreće u rasponu od 25,7 do 27,6 godina. Također se pokazuje da su u gornjoj dobnoj granici koncentrirani mladi koji su članovi tijela izvršne vlasti, a po čemu su gotovo izjednačeni s mladim saborskim zastupnicima. Svi navedeni podaci nedvojbeno ukazuju na to da političke funkcije mladima postaju dostupnije tek kada se primaknu izlasku iz omladinske



dobi. Slijedom toga, većina mladih koji će, stječući iskustvo u lokalnoj politici, napredovati do nacionalne razine, to neće postići prije ulaska u mladu srednju dob. Očito je, dakle, da se budući mladi saborski zastupnici mogu regrutirati iz uske baze najmladih lokalnih dužnosnika ili nekim drugim, u pravilu stranačkim, kanalima.

U tablici 6 prikazani su podaci o zastupljenosti mladih među stranačkim predstavnicima tijela lokalne vlasti, a koji se mogu tumačiti kao indikator stranačke generacijske politike. Promatrani iz drugog rakursa ti podaci istodobno govore o stranačkoj strukturi mladih lokalnih dužnosnika.

**TABLICA 6: ZASTUPLJENOST MLADIH MEĐU PREDSTAVNICIMA
POLITIČKIH STRANAKA I GRUPACIJA TE STRANAČKA STRUKTURA
MLADIH U TIJELIMA LOKALNE VLASTI U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

Tijela vlasti	HDZ	SDP	HNS	HSP	HSS	IDS	HSLs	Ost.	Nez.
Županijske skupštine	9,5	6,9	5,3	3,9	3,6	9,1	0,0	6,3	0,0
Županijska poglavarstva	1,3	5,4	4,0	3,1	11,5	11,1	6,7	0,0	20,0
Gradska vijeća	8,1	11,2	7,7	10,5	5,8	6,5	7,8	4,3	5,3
Gradska poglavarstva	3,8	4,1	5,3	7,0	0,0	5,7	2,6	8,9	1,7
Predstavnička vlast	8,4	9,8	6,9	8,0	5,0	7,0	5,4	5,0	4,8
Izvršna vlast	3,2	4,4	4,9	5,3	4,3	6,8	3,7	6,2	2,4
Regionalna razina	7,7	6,6	5,0	3,7	5,1	10,3	1,6	5,0	4,0
Gradska razina	7,0	9,6	7,1	9,6	4,7	6,3	6,4	5,4	4,0
Hrvatska - ukupno	7,2	8,7	6,4	7,3	4,9	7,0	5,0	4,0	4,6
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	0,0	10,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Stranačka struktura mladih									
u lokalnoj vlasti	34,2	21,9	8,1	7,7	6,9	4,2	3,8	6,7	6,5

Legenda: Ost.: ostale stranke; Nez.: nezavisne liste i kandidati



S obzirom na to koliku su šansu pružile mladima, političke se stranke mogu svrstati u tri skupine. Prva je skupina onih kod kojih se može očitati nešto sustavnija stranačka politika pomlađivanja na lokalnoj razini. Pripadaju joj SDP, HDZ, HSP i IDS. Među njima se najviše ističe SDP jer se među lokalnim dužnosnicima iz te stranke nalazi najviše mladih, a što je komplementarno podacima na nacionalnoj razini - u Saboru svi mladi zastupnici dolaze iz SDP-a (točnije, dvoje su članovi stranke, a jedan je kao nezavisni kandidat izabran na toj stranačkoj listi) i ujedno čine desetinu zastupnika te stranke. HDZ i IDS također pokazuju spremnost pružiti priliku mladima, premda manje od SDP-a, dok je kod HSP-a ta tendencija tek naznačena. U drugu skupinu stranaka ulazi samo jedna (HNS) u kojoj je zastupljenost mladih na razini hrvatskog prosjeka. Treću skupinu stranaka obilježava ispodprosječna zastupljenost mladih. Riječ je prvenstveno o nezavisnim listama i ostalima (u prosjeku malim) strankama te HSS-u. Nezavisne liste su nestabilne političke grupacije, od kojih se po prirodi stvari manje može očekivati da vode računa o mladima (ili ženama) u svojim redovima, ali HSS je etablirana politička stranka, i utoliko bi trebala biti jako zainteresirana za kadrovsku obnovu. No, kako je riječ o stranci koja je tradicionalistički orijentirana i ima veće uporište u ruralnim sredinama - koje su, s jedne strane, demografski starije, a s druge, obilježene paternalizmom kao sastavnim dijelom još uvijek dominantne patrijarhalne matrice međugeneracijskih odnosa - nije neočekivano da mladi nisu među skupinama favoriziranim u toj stranci. Ipak, vidi se da su mladi dužnosnici koji dolaze iz HSS-a i IDS-a natprosječno prisutni u županijskim skupštinama, dok su gradska vijeća utvrde mladih iz SDP-a.

Kada se zastupljenost mladih u lokalnoj politici promatra sa stajališta stranačke strukture, tada se vidi da trećina od svih 260 mladih dužnosnika dolazi iz redova HDZ-a, više od petine iz SDP-a, dok su preostali mladi dužnosnici članovi ostalih stranaka i grupacija (u rasponu 4-8%). Stranačka struktura mladih dužnosnika zapravo uvelike odražava situaciju u cjelokupnoj lokalnoj vlasti gdje su HDZ i SDP također najjače stranke. Vjerojatno snaga tih stranaka dodatno stimulira njihovu spremnost da više mladih pozicioniraju na izglednija mjesta na svojim izbornim listama. Za njih je to manje rizično nego za manje stranke, koje jednostavno nemaju dovoljno izglednih izbornih mjesta za zaslužne stranačke dužnosnike, čije se prvenstvo smatra neupitnim. No, veličina stranke nije presudan uvjet za bolji plasman mladih, što pokazuje slučaj IDS-a. Glavnu ulogu - uz kvantitetu i kvalitetu političkog angažmana mladih - ipak igraju unutarstranačke regule kojima se uređuje status mladih članova, te politička volja da se politički položaj mladih u stranci programski jasno definira i dosljedno primijeni na izbornim listama.

Da već prisutnost mladih među lokalnim dužnosnicima SDP-a, a donekle i HDZ-a, nije slučajna pokazuje i to da je od 1992. do danas, među ukupno 11 mladih



saborskih zastupnika, iz SDP-a bilo njih šest, iz HDZ-a četvero i jedan iz HSS-a. Postojana zastupljenost mladih socijaldemokrata među dužnosnicima na svim razinama vlasti nedvojbeno upućuje na izgrađenu stranačku politiku prema mladima koja se manifestira i kroz veću zastupljenost mladih članova SDP-a u tijelima vlasti i većim nastojanjem cijele stranke (dakako, posredstvom mladih dužnosnika) da na hrvatskoj političkoj sceni permanentno aktualiziraju i preispituju omladinska pitanja i probleme.

4.2. Spolna i socijalna struktura mladih dužnosnika

Ranije je pokazano kako je zastupljenost žena u lokalnoj i nacionalnoj vlasti uglavnom ujednačena na 17%, a što je indikator podzastupljenosti žena u hrvatskoj politici uopće. U tom je kontekstu intrigantno vidjeti kakav je status žena unutar grupe mladih dužnosnika (tablica 7).

**TABLICA 7: SPOLNA STRUKTURA
MLADIH U TIJELIMA LOKALNE
VLASTI U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

Tijela vlasti	Muškarci		Žene	
	f	%	f	%
Županijske skupštine	39	68,4	18	31,6
Županijska poglavarstva	4	36,4	7	63,6
Gradska vijeća	121	74,2	42	25,8
Gradska poglavarstva	25	86,2	4	13,8
Predstavnička vlast	160	72,7	60	27,3
Izvršna vlast	29	72,5	11	27,5
Regionalna razina	43	63,2	25	36,8
Gradska razina	146	76,0	46	24,0
Hrvatska - ukupno	189	72,7	71	27,3
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	1	33,3	2	66,7



Među prikazanim podacima po važnosti se ističe veća zastupljenost žena među mladim nego među svim dužnosnicima, što je zacijelo posljedica više faktora. Prvo, možemo pretpostaviti da su mlade žene manje pod utjecajem patrijarhalnih vrijednosti, kako tijekom socijalizacijskog procesa, tako i u aktualnim okolnostima, pa su više spremne i motivirane da se okušaju i u političkom radu, uključujući prihvaćanje čelnih mjesta i odgovornijih dužnosti. To podrazumijeva njihovu veću uključenost u rad političkih stranaka, što stvara širu osnovicu iz koje stranke mogu izabrati kandidatkinje za obnašanje političkih dužnosti. Osim toga, mogući razlog većoj zastupljenosti žena među mladima može biti i prakticiranje “dvostrukih kvota”, tj. svjesno postavljanje mladih žena na izglednija mjesta na izbornim listama, čime se istodobno utječe i na dobnu i na spolnu strukturu lista, a posljedično i izabranih tijela lokalne vlasti.

Gledajući spolnu strukturu mladih dužnosnika po grupiranim tijelima vlasti, osobito je zanimljivo to da su mlade žene jednako zastupljene u predstavničkim i izvršnim tijelima, te da su im regionalna tijela inače otvorenija od gradskih. Pojedinačno gledajući, u odnosu na ukupnu zastupljenost mladih žena, odskače njihova izrazita nadzastupljenost u županijskim poglavarstvima i značajna podzastupljenost u gradskim poglavarstvima - kao da mlade žene na neki način “preskaču” prvu stepenicu (grad) političkog napredovanja i odmah startaju s drugom (županija). Možemo pretpostaviti da se to događa prvenstveno voljom stranačkih elita, pri čemu se čini da je gradska vlast gdje se raspolaže konkretnijom moći, privlačnija muškarcima. Ipak, ostaje činjenica da mlade žene lakše prodiru u lokalnu politiku od ostalih žena, o čemu govori i podatak da među svim ženama u lokalnoj vlasti mladih žena ima 10,3%, dok su među muškarcima mladi prisutni upola manje, tj. ima ih 5,5%. Također treba istaknuti kako pojačan ulazak mladih žena u lokalnu politiku širi osnovicu iz koje bi se trebale regrutirati žene za nacionalna tijela vlasti. Ukoliko prodor mladih žena u lokalnu vlast nije slučajan, može se predvidjeti da će se u skorijoj budućnosti zastupljenost žena poboljšati i na nacionalnoj razini, posebice u parlamentu. Ako se to i dogodi, još uvijek će zastupljenost žena biti znatno ispod 40% što je donja granica kojoj se teži u rodno utemeljenoj redistribuciji političke moći.

Tip prikupljenih podataka u ovom istraživanju ne omogućuje nam uvid u to iz kojih političkih stranaka dolazi proporcionalno najviše žena, no ako imamo na umu dosadašnje tendencije u Hrvatskom saboru moguće je pretpostaviti da je riječ o SDP-u. Naime, od 11 mladih zastupnika koliko ih je u proteklih pet izbornih ciklusa prošlo kroz Sabor, bilo je šest žena (od kojih je njih pet bilo iz SDP-a), a što se može objasniti i činjenicom da je i inače među zastupnicima te stranke redovito bila trećina žena (osim nakon prvih višestranačkih izbora). SDP je inače stranka



koju se, po spremnosti da intervenira u društvene odnose kako bi se popravio položaj marginaliziranih grupa, svrstava u skupinu modernih društveno-regulativnih stranaka (Leinert Novosel, 1999), a što se onda manifestira i kroz strukturu izabranih predstavnika te stranke u tijelima vlasti. Na taj se način SDP legitimira kao stranka koja najdosljednije prakticira politiku ravnopravnosti spolova, a kada se tome doda programski jasno definirana politika prema mladima, jedna od logičnih posljedica jest olakšan ulazak mladih članica te stranke u tijela vlasti na svim razinama.

Poznato je da je prosječno trajanje studiranja u Hrvatskoj predugo (preko 7 godina) i da diplomu stekne nešto manje od polovice upisanih studenata. Ove činjenice utječu i na obrazovnu strukturu mladih u Hrvatskoj (ali s napomenom da je unatoč takvoj neefikasnosti studiranja svaka nova generacija mladih obrazovanija od prethodne), pa tako i na obrazovna postignuća mladih dužnosnika u lokalnoj vlasti (tablica 8). Kao mali kuriozum treba primijetiti da su za svih 260 mladih dužnosnika stručne službe raspolagale podacima o stupnju obrazovanja, te da među njima nema nijednog magistra ili doktora znanosti.

**TABLICA 8: OBRAZOVNA STRUKTURA
MLADIH U TIJELIMA LOKALNE VLASTI
U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

Tijela vlasti	OŠ	SSS-3	SSS-4	VŠS	VSS
Županijske skupštine	0,0	0,0	63,2	12,3	24,6
Županijska poglavarstva	0,0	0,0	0,0	18,2	81,8
Gradska vijeća	0,6	3,0	52,8	12,3	31,3
Gradska poglavarstva	0,0	0,0	27,6	24,1	48,3
Predstavnička vlast	0,5	2,2	55,5	12,3	29,5
Izvršna vlast	0,0	0,0	20,0	22,5	57,5
Regionalna razina	0,0	0,0	52,9	13,3	33,8
Gradska razina	0,5	2,5	49,0	14,1	33,9
Hrvatska - ukupno	0,4	1,9	50,0	13,8	33,9
Hrvatski sabor 2003.	0,0	0,0	33,3	0,0	66,7

Legenda: SSS-3: trogodišnja srednja škola; SSS-4: četverogodišnja srednja škola; VŠS: viša stručna sprema; VSS: visoka stručna sprema (fakultet).



Najkraće rečeno, nešto manje od polovice mladih dužnosnika ima više ili visoko obrazovanje, a najbrojnija skupina su oni sa završenom četverogodišnjom srednjom školom. To je lošija obrazovna struktura nego što je ustanovljeno za tijela lokalne vlasti u cijelosti (tablica 3), što se može objasniti činjenicom da dio mladih još studira i da će jednog dana steći diplome (ili bar većina njih). Oni koji su akademski obrazovani koncentrirani su u izvršnoj vlasti (osobito na županijskoj razini), gdje su vjerojatno tretirani kao mladi stručnjaci.

Prethodne podatke dopunjavaju nalazi o socioprofesionalnom statusu mladih dužnosnika (tablica 9), među kojima nema nijednog učenika (a što je bilo predviđeno kao mogućnost).

**TABLICA 9: SOCIOPROFESIONALNI
STATUS MLADIH U TIJELIMA LOKALNE
VLASTI U HRVATSKOJ 2005. (%)**

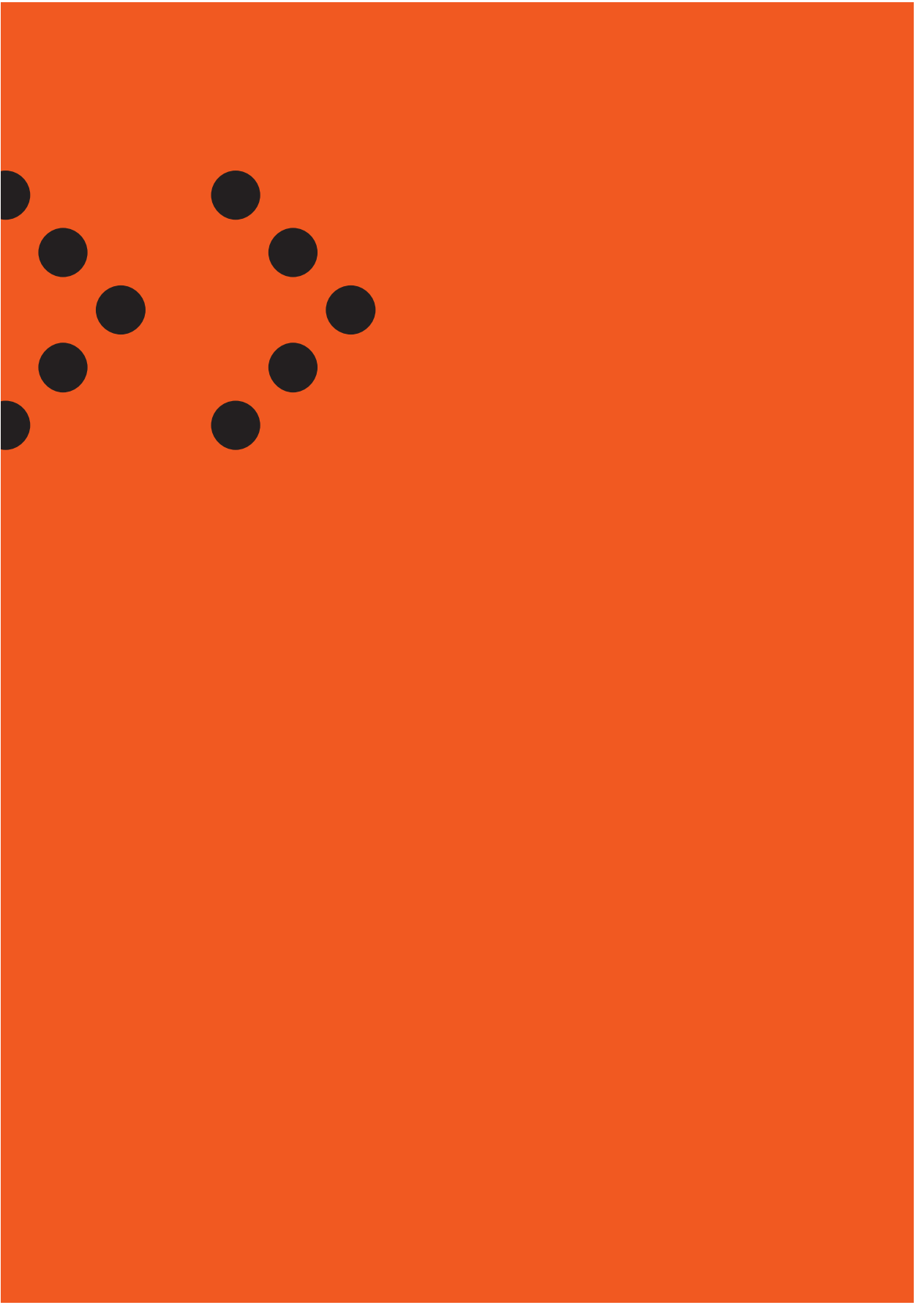
Tijela vlasti	Zaposleni	Studenti	Nezaposleni	Poljoprivrednici
Županijske skupštine	56,1	38,6	3,5	1,8
Županijska poglavarstva	100,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Gradska vijeća	68,1	20,9	10,4	0,6
Gradska poglavarstva	86,2	10,3	3,5	0,0
Predstavnička vlast	65,0	25,5	8,6	0,9
Izvršna vlast	90,0	7,5	2,5	0,0
Regionalna razina	63,2	32,4	2,9	1,5
Gradska razina	70,8	19,3	9,4	0,5
Hrvatska - ukupno	68,8	22,7	7,7	0,8



Svakako je zanimljivo da među mladim dužnosnicima dominiraju oni koji su zaposleni. Drugi po zastupljenosti su studenti, dok je nezaposlenih razmjerno malo, a poljoprivrednici su tek simbolično prisutni. Zaposleni u natprosječnom broju obavljaju dužnosti u izvršnoj vlasti, zasigurno dio njih i profesionalno, tj. kroz radni odnos. Studenti su, s druge strane, natprosječno prisutni u županijskim skupštinama. Ovakva raspodjela govori da se političke stranke prvenstveno uzdaju u one mlade koji su već dovršili profesionalno obrazovanje i započeli profesionalnu karijeru, dok su im studenti (koji su očito zainteresiraniji za politiku od nezaposlenih) glavna rezervna snaga. Minorna zastupljenost mladih poljoprivrednika zacijelo je posljedica općenito malog broja mladih koji se bave poljoprivredom, te poznatog trenda da je ruralno stanovništvo više rezervirano spram politike (a osobito osobnog angažmana) od urbanog stanovništva.



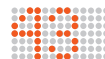
05



05 Zaključna rasprava

➤ **NA OSNOVI DOSADAŠNJIH SAZNAANJA** o participaciji mladih u političkim institucijama i procesima može se konstatirati da je hrvatska politika značajno obilježena neravnomjernom generacijskom distribucijom moći. Pritom se može ustvrditi da su tijekom tranzicijskog razdoblja u Hrvatskoj mladi politički marginalizirani unatoč činjenici da su se u tom relativno kratkom vremenu čak u tri navrata stekle takve povijesne, društvene i političke okolnosti koje, teorijski i iskustveno, pogoduju snažnijem prodoru mladih u institucionalnu politiku. Prvi puta mladi su postali gubitnici 1990. godine kada, kao potencijalno nova politička snaga neopterećena bremenitom političkom prošlošću, nisu uspjeli izbiti u prvi plan. Tada su dominirali ostarjeli politički disidenti koji su osvajanjem vlasti naplatili svoje dugogodišnje prisilno izbivanje s političke scene. Drugi se puta to zbilo 2000. godine, prilikom velike smjene vlasti nakon desetogodišnjeg monopola jedne političke stranke, kada mladi nisu uspjeli kapitalizirati svoje ratne i ine zasluge ni iskoristiti spremnost javnosti da prihvati nove političke opcije i osobe. Tadašnje opozicijske stranke prednost su dale zaslužnim iiskusnim političarima koji su cijelu dekadu (ne)strpljivo čekali osvajanje svog dijela vlasti. Istodobno, dotada vladajuća stranka bila je zaokupljena određivanjem što boljih pozicija na izbornim listama za narasli broj zaslužnih članova koji su nastojali osigurati svoje mjesto u parlamentu nakon gubitka izvršne vlasti. Treći se puta to dogodilo koncem 2003. godine kada je biračka volja nezadovoljnih građana vratila na vlast (polu)reformirani HDZ. Ni većina do tada vladajućih stranaka ni HDZ koji se riješio znatnog broja prononsiranih i u javnosti neomiljenih kadrova, nisu razočarani biračima na svojim listama ponudili nove, nekompromitirane kandidate koji bi, po prirodi stvari, morali doći iz redova mladih članova stranaka.

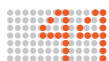
Nespremnost starijih političara da odstupe u korist mladih u Hrvatskoj je zaoštreniji problem nego u društvima s dugom demokratskom tradicijom, između ostaloga i zato što u suvremenom hrvatskom društvu ne egzistira pluralizam elita (Županov, 1995). Naime, u tranzicijskom razdoblju degradirane su ionako rudimentarno razvijene elite (menadžerska, znanstvena, kulturna...) pri čemu je - uz enormno zahuktalu trku za medijskom slavom - jedino visoki politički status s pratećim



privilegijama opstao kao višestruko poželjan. Politika je i u tranzicijskom razdoblju ostala lukrativna djelatnost koja, doduše, sve manje donosi ugled, ali osigurava moć i socioekonomsku sigurnost, što je u osiromašenom i gospodarski posrnulom društvu vrlo važan stimulans za profesionalno bavljenje politikom. Takve okolnosti izazivaju rašireno podozrenje građana da je profesionalni politički rad (pre)često motiviran osiguranjem isplative sinekure koju se potom brani svim raspoloživim sredstvima, a što se posebice zaoštava u društvu u kojem su kanali socijalne promocije znatno suženi. Tako se događa da je društvena moć ponajprije svedena na političku, a to sve one koji ostaju izvan institucionalne politike potiskuje na društvene margine. To je ujedno i jedan od razloga stalnog rasta aspiranata na moć i vlast. Moć je posvuda, a naročito u nedovoljno pluralnim i demokratski deficitarnim društvima, visoko poželjan, ali ograničen resurs. Kako pretendenti na vlast ima znatno više nego što ima raspoložive moći, diskvalificiranje mladih već u startu (kao nekompetentnih i neiskusnih) učinkovit je mehanizam za smanjivanje ionako oštre konkurencije.

U suvremenom društvu dobna diskriminacija još nije postala političko pitanje u istoj mjeri kao spolna, što važi i za Hrvatsku. No logično je pretpostaviti da će dobro utemeljene nejednakosti to više dobivati na važnosti što će hrvatsko društvo biti manje opterećeno tradicionalnim ideološko-političkim polarizacijama. Tim prije što su i u demokratskoj Europi, gdje mladih također uglavnom nema na mjestima političkog odlučivanja, sve učestaliji artikulirani zahtjevi da se takva situacija promijeni. Treba ponovo reći da je politička participacija mladih u razvijenim demokratskim zemljama Europe na takvoj razini da se doživljava kao realna prijetnja za budućnost reprezentativne demokracije. Slična je situacija i u tranzicijskoj Hrvatskoj, u kojoj je aktiviranje ukupnih društvenih i političkih potencijala mladih utoliko važnije jer može pridonijeti bržoj i kvalitetnijoj konsolidaciji demokratskog poretka, kao i nastojanjima da se Hrvatska optimalno integrira u ujedinjenu Europu. Raspoloživi podaci pokazuju da se mladi Hrvatske po niskom stupnju i nepovoljnim obilježjima političke participacije uglavnom ne razlikuju od svojih europskih vršnjaka iz čega slijedi da su mladi i u Europi i u Hrvatskoj politički marginalizirani, ponajprije u tradicionalnim političkim institucijama i procesima.

Upravo zato europske politike prema mladima kao jedan od najvažnijih ciljeva ističu poboljšanje političke participacije mladih. I u Hrvatskoj je taj cilj inkorporiran u osnove politike prema mladima, ali s razmjerno skromnim opsegom zahtjeva. U ovom je trenutku najvažnija činjenica da se nakon više od desetljeća potiskivanja mladih na margine društvenog i političkog života pojavila politička volja da se koncipira podloga za vođenje racionalne i integralne politike prema mladima. (Ne)uspješnost te politike ovisit će i o stanju društvene svijesti, i o političkoj volji nositelja vlasti, i o materijalnim resursima, ali u podjednakoj mjeri i o unutargeneracijskom povezivanju mladih radi



artikuliranja i promicanja generacijskih interesa i potreba. To znači da je nužan politički angažman mladih, i to kao sinkronizirano djelovanje u institucijama vlasti i civilnom sektoru, ponajprije kroz razne udruge, inicijative i kampanje mladih.

Zajednički cilj kojem teže i udruge mladih i mladi koji aktivno participiraju u institucionalnoj politici jest dobrobit mlade generacije. Da bi u tome imali uspjeha nužno je da mladih bude što više u tijelima odlučivanja, odnosno da se njihova zastupljenost barem približi petini, koliko ih ima i u biračkom tijelu. Analize participacije mladih u nacionalnim i lokalnim tijelima vlasti u Hrvatskoj nedvojbeno pokazuju da je ona ispodprosječna i daleko od toga da bi mladi, makar u kvantitativnom smislu, mogli biti promatrani kao respektabilna politička grupacija. Pritom se uočava očekivana tendencija: što je viša razina vlasti, smanjuje se zastupljenost mladih. Druga je pravilnost da su mladima znatno dostupnija tijela predstavničke naspram izvršne vlasti. Treće, među mladim dužnosnicima izrazito dominiraju oni koji su se približili tridesetoj godini života, dok su mlađi od 25 godina tek simbolično zastupljeni. Četvrto, zastupljenost žena među mladim dužnosnicima veća je od udjela žena među svim dužnosnicima. Osim spomenutih tendencija, ustanovljeno je kako je obrazovna struktura mladih u lokalnim tijelima vlasti nešto lošija nego kod starijih. Jedan od razloga svakako je to što studenti čine više od petine mladih dužnosnika. Ta je tendencija po svom značenju ambivalentna - s jedne strane, studenti su, uz to što su ona skupina mladih koja je najviše zainteresirana za politiku, svakako kompetentniji od mladih koji su svoje profesionalno obrazovanje okončali sa srednjom školom, ali s druge strane, njihova poodmakla omladinska dob upućuje na (pre)dugo studiranje. To pobuđuje bojazni da dio njih nikada neće završiti studij, a što svakako nije preporuka za regrutaciju u političku elitu.

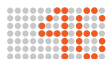
Podaci o stranačkoj pripadnosti lokalnih mladih dužnosnika pokazuju kako većina stranaka nije osobito senzibilizirana u pogledu problema nedovoljne političke participacije mladih. Iz rezultata ovog istraživanja i spoznaja do kojih se došlo analizom participacije mladih u nacionalnom parlamentu, može se zaključiti da sustavnu brigu o političkoj participaciji mladih vodi jedino SDP te, djelomično, HDZ. Potonja stranka je kao najsnažnija tijekom cijelog tranzicijskog razdoblja, imala najviše prostora da dio mjesta u tijelima vlasti prepusti svojim mladim članovima. SDP, po snazi druga stranka, kontinuirano je davala šansu mladim članovima, čak i u razdobljima kada je, kao u prvoj polovici 1990-ih, jedva zadržala parlamentarni status. Ova stranka proklamira i prakticira regulaciju u selekciji stranačkih kadrova primjenjujući načelo tzv. pozitivne diskriminacije za žene i mlade kao društveno i politički marginalizirane skupine. Riječ je o instrumentu internih korektivnih kvota, kojima se u političkim strankama propisuju minimalni postoci za predstavnike društveno marginaliziranih skupina na izbornim listama. Kako SDP na svim



razinama vlasti daje proporcionalno najviše mladih, kao i najviše žena među njima, upravo primjer te stranke pokazuje da dosljedna provedba programskih načela vezanih za politiku prema mladima (i ženama) rezultira njihovom većom participacijom u tijelima vlasti.

Dosadašnja saznanja sugeriraju da promocija i afirmacija marginalnih skupina ovisi o promjenama u javnoj svijesti, koje se, u pravilu, odvijaju sporo. Smjer i ubrzanje željenim promjenama mogu dati upravo političke stranke koje primjenom interno utvrđenih korektivnih kvota postaju jedna od glavnih poluga za mijenjanje nezadovoljavajućeg stanja (Nohlen, 1992). Naime, iskustvo pokazuje da su rijetka društva u kojima je javna svijest takva da se politička participacija tradicionalno diskriminiranih skupina može u cijelosti prepustiti mehanizmima samoregulacije i kompeticije. Primijeni li se ovo na hrvatsku situaciju i mlade, razvidno je da politička afirmacija mladih u vrlo velikoj mjeri ovisi o volji političkih stranaka. Veće povjerenje koje bi stranke ukazale svojim mladim članovima bilo bi (pre)poruka javnosti da se mlade može i treba tretirati kao pouzdane, odgovorne i kompetentne. U hrvatskim političkim prilikama to bi bilo prilično lako postići, jer birači primarno glasuju za stranke, pa eventualni izgovori kako bi mladi, nepoznati, kandidati odvratili birače od preferirane stranke ne zvuče uvjerljivo. Konkretnije, u trokutu mladi - političke stranke - birači najmanje ograničavajući faktor su ovi potonji, odnosno (ne)spremnost birača da glasuju za mlade stranačke kandidate. Znatno su važniji akteri stranački ogranci i stranački podmladci jer o volji lokalnih stranačkih elita i aktivizmu stranačkih podmladaka presudno ovisi kako će, promatrano sa stajališta zastupljenosti mladih, biti kreirane izborne stranačke liste.

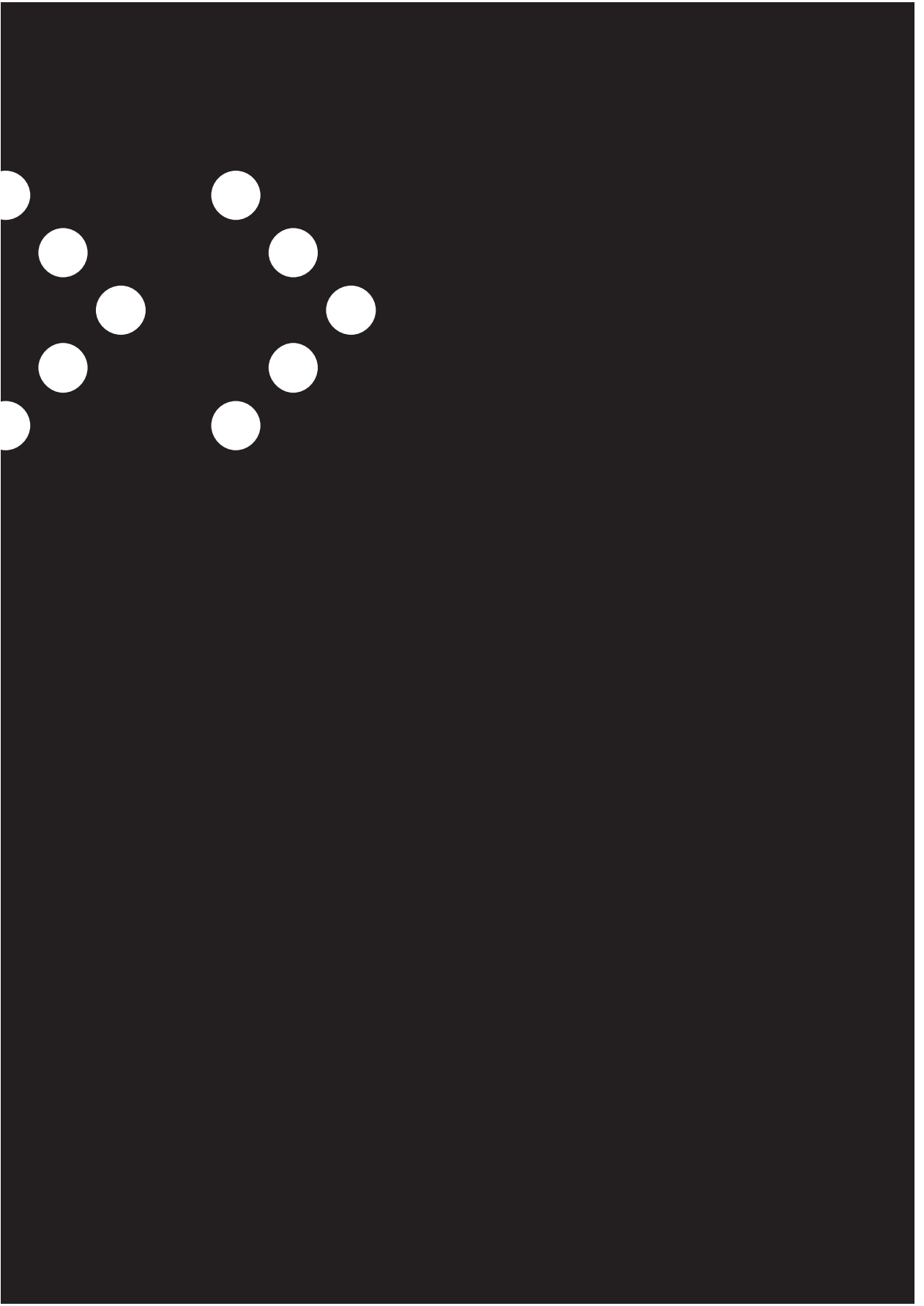
Kako bi zakonsko određivanje minimalnih kvota mladih (ili žena) za određena tijela vlasti predstavljalo zadiranje u slobodnu volju birača - pri čemu je indikativno da takve propisane kvote većina hrvatskih političara načelno odbija, a većina mladih zagovara (Ilišin, 1999; 2002; 2005) - najprihvatljiviji i najefikasniji mehanizam ostaje primjena internih stranačkih kvota na izbornim listama na svim razinama. Dobna struktura tijela lokalne vlasti jasno pokazuje kako većina stranaka taj instrument ne koristi, barem ne na svrsishodan način. Iako se zasad ne čini da birači kažnjavaju stranke zbog nedostatnog podmlađivanja svojih izbornih lista, niti da honoriraju one koje to čine, stranke bi, makar radi vlastitog opstanka, morale voditi računa o permanentnoj kadrovskoj obnovi. Sustavna politika stranačkog podmlađivanja sigurno bi rezultirala većom zastupljenošću mladih u tijelima vlasti, a prateći efekti toga bili bi i društvena afirmacija mladih uopće i senzibiliziranje javnosti na društvene probleme, potrebe i ulogu mladih. Jedan od načina da političke stranke budu prisiljene da više uvažavaju interese mladih - i u društvu i u vlastitim redovima - jesu i javni pritisci koji bi trebali doći iz udruga i inicijativa mladih. Takve su udruge



najpozvanije da edukacijskim djelovanjem i javnim zagovaranjem promoviraju interese mladih kao integralnog dijela društva, najvitalnijeg i najfleksibilnijeg društvenog resursa i nositelja kreativnih i inovativnih potencijala. Njihovo djelovanje ujedno može pomoći onim rijetkim mladima koji već participiraju u vlasti da bolje zastupaju vlastitu generaciju, ali i obvezati ih da u svom političkom djelovanju odgovorno i ustrajno promoviraju interese mladih.

Na koncu treba reći i to da će otvaranje većeg prostora za buduće generacije mladih u lokalnoj i nacionalnoj politici ovisiti i o djelovanju sadašnjih mladih dužnosnika. Time se želi reći da nije dostatno da mladi budu samo zastupljeni u tijelima vlasti nego da je vrlo važna i kvaliteta njihova rada u tim tijelima. Zastupljenost je nužan preduvjet za ostvarivanje utjecaja, ali aktivno sudjelovanje mladih dužnosnika u procesu odlučivanja - od davanja inicijativa preko kritičkog razmatranja i odlučivanja do faze realizacije donesenih odluka - nije samo jedini legitiman način za ostvarivanje utjecaja u demokratskom tijelu vlasti nego je i najbolji oblik javne promocije političke kompetencije mladih. Najkraće rečeno, kvalitetan politički rad sadašnjih mladih dužnosnika trasira put za lakši i snažniji prodor budućih naraštaja mladih u tijela vlasti na svim razinama.







06 : 94 NIJE FER UTAKMICA!

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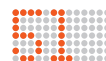
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Prilog istraživanju: Osvrt na teškoće u prikupljanju podataka

➤ **PRIKUPLJANJE OSNOVNIH STATISTIČKIH PODATAKA** koji su korišteni u ovom istraživanju pokazalo se znatno zahtjevnijim poslom nego što je početno bilo predviđeno i planirano. Tijekom tog procesa pojavile su se različite neočekivane teškoće koje su usporile realizaciju te faze istraživanja. Brojnost i vrsta teškoća plastično ilustriraju stanje u lokalnoj vlasti u Hrvatskoj zbog čega smo odlučili nalaze istraživanja dopuniti ovim prilogom. Podaci su prikupljeni dvostruko duže od planiranog vremena i to od kraja studenog 2005. do sredine siječnja 2006. godine. Ispitivanje se provodilo u gradskim i županijskim upravama u Republici Hrvatskoj, a inicijalni kontakti sa stručnim službama u svim gradovima i županijama uspostavljeni su telefonskim putem pri čemu je pojašnjena svrha istraživanja i način popunjavanja upitnika. U uredima gradonačelnika/ca odnosno župana/ica upućivani smo na različite profile osoba za koje se smatralo da bi mogle biti nadležne za naš upit, nakon čega im je dostavljen dopis o projektu zajedno s upitnikom (putem faksa i/ili elektronskom poštom) i naznačenim rokom ispunjavanja. To je znalo usporavati naš rad jer se te osobe često nisu smatrale mjerodavnima za pružanje traženih podataka. Pri tome mislimo na gradonačelnike/ce, tajnike/ce poglavarstva, pročelnike/ce ureda za društvene djelatnosti, pročelnike/ce upravnih odjela, osobe zadužene za odnose s javnošću, tajnice ureda gradonačelnika, pomoćnike/ce župana, pravnike/ce pa čak i osobe zaposlene u odjelu računovodstva. Očito je, dakle, da ne postoji usuglašeni mehanizam informiranja javnosti na razini lokalnih tijela vlasti u Republici Hrvatskoj.

Tijekom prikupljanja podataka, samo je oko 10% gradova/županija u prvom pokušaju dostavilo valjano ispunjene upitnike. U svim ostalim slučajevima trebala su dodatna objašnjenja, ispravke, zamolbe i požurnice. Često se događala pogreška da su umjesto razdvojenih podataka za izvršno i predstavničko tijelo vlasti, dostavljani zbirni podaci nakon čega je slijedio zahtjev za korekcijama. Rasprava se vodila i oko gornje granice dobi za mlade osobe. *Nacionalni program djelovanja za mlade* definira mlade kao populaciju od 15 do 29 godina života, no za mnoge su mladi bili i oni s 35 godina. Najveći problem su neažurirani statistički podaci o članovima tijela lokalne vlasti, što znači da malo koji grad/županija ima na jednom mjestu objedinjene osnovne informacije o svojim izabranim članovima kao što su dob, stranačka pripadnost, stručna sprema i socioprofesionalni status. Neki su se pritom pozivali na tajnost tih podataka, neki napominjali da ne postoji zakon koji ih obvezuje da vode takav registar, neki da te podatke mogu dati neslužbeno, a



neki nas upućivali u poduzeća gdje su članovi tih tijela inače zaposleni. Dobili smo uvid da većina stručnih službi uopće nije upoznata sa *Zakonom o pravu na pristup informacijama*, a generalna slika govori o prilično niskoj političkoj kulturi te raširenoj političkoj nepismenosti osoba koje rade u tijelima lokalne vlasti u Hrvatskoj.

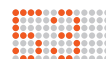
Pitanje stranačke pripadnosti naglasili bismo kao posebno *osjetljiv* segment ovog istraživanja. Različita koaliranja, predizborna kao i postizborna, velik broj nezavisnih lista, često mijenjanje stranačke pripadnosti, trenutno aktualna trgovina mandatima te prelaženje u nezavisne vijećnike, dijelom su izmijenili prvotne službene izborne rezultate te pomutili uvid u stranačku pripadnost, kako nama kao istraživačima tako i stručnim osobama u upravama. Te promjene u većoj mjeri pogađaju izvršna od predstavničkih tijela vlasti pri čemu je bitno to da su se spomenuta stranačka preslagivanja zbivala u relativno malom broju jedinica lokalne samouprave te da su zahvatila izrazito manjinski dio izabраних dužnosnika. Drugim riječima, postizborne promjene u stranačkom sastavu izabраних tijela vlasti nisu tolikog opsega da dovode u pitanje relevantnost dobivenih podataka ali su izrazito značajne za analize dinamike političkih odnosa i funkcioniranja tijela lokalne vlasti u sklopu procesa demokratske konsolidacije.

Komunikacija s predstavnicima gradova/županija bila je zadovoljavajuća i korektna, iako smo u nekoliko navrata kontaktirali s osobama koje su neformalno pa čak i s nepoštovanjem govorile o svojim kolegama. Veći dio stručnih službi gradova/županija vrlo rado je prihvatio suradnju, dok je manji dio bio rezigniran, doživljavajući ispunjavanje upitnika kao dodatnu nepotrebnu obvezu. Tome u prilog govori i to da su nas neki predstavnici gradova uputili na svoju internetsku stranicu da sami prikupimo tražene podatke ili nam ih dostavili čak i dva mjeseca nakon dogovorenog roka.

Iako smo na samom početku ovog istraživanja očekivali kako to neće biti pretjerano složen i dugotrajan posao, ostali smo iznenađeni iskustvom kako je teško doći do podataka od općeg interesa za javnost. Očito smo previše optimistički smatrali da bi standardni statistički podaci trebali biti lako dostupni zainteresiranim građanima i institucijama - ako ne putem web stranica (u tom pogledu ima nekoliko gradova koji mogu poslužiti kao pozitivan primjer) onda nekim drugim učinkovitim mehanizmom komunikacije koji podrazumijeva fleksibilniji i stručniji birokratski aparat. Treba se nadati da će porast interesa za lokalnu politiku u Hrvatskoj animirati tijela lokalne vlasti da prikupljaju i učine dostupnim podatke o socijalnim obilježjima lokalnih dužnosnika na sličan način kako se to čini za dužnosnike u tijelima vlasti na nacionalnoj razini.

Ivana Biškup

Ivana Pražetina

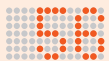






YOUTH IN CROATIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT
VLASTA ILIŠIN

RESEARCH



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RESEARCH



00 Preface

➤ **DIM IS THE ORGANIZATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY** that empowers citizens and inspires them to become more active in society. Aiming at the realization of its mission, DIM implements programs of informal education of young people, aiming at citizen education for democracy, research projects related to the position of youth and advocating and networking actions directed toward positive changes of youth policies.

Since 2001, DIM is conducting a program *Education for young politicians*, directed at strengthening of participation of young persons in the decision-making processes of political institutions and institutions of power at local level, as well as at capacity building for young leaders in political parties, unions and non-governmental organizations. The program has during all these years been financed by the *Olof Palme International Center* and *The Friedrich Ebert Foundation*.

Within the program we have conducted a research at the end of 2005 in 123 cities and 21 counties in the Republic of Croatia, through which we have wanted to determine the level of participation of youth in institutions of power at local (city) and regional (county) levels. The basic goal of this research was to investigate the representation of young people in institutions of local authorities in the Republic of Croatia, their party membership and their basic socio-structural attributes. For the purpose of determining of those characteristics, party membership and some socio-structural attributes of all members of institutions of local authorities in general, and the sub-group of young officials in particular, have been investigated. As young members of institutions of power, all those aged 18 to 29 years of life were included, in line with the definition explained in *The National Programme of Action for Youth*.

In Croatia, youth as participants of political processes, are extremely marginalized. Through our five-year program, which includes a number of seminars - lectures, workshops, trainings with more than 200 young political leaders have participated in acquiring new knowledge and skills for better quality work in their organizations, we were faced with the fact that their work and engagement is rarely interesting to the media, the political protagonists, the political institutions and even in their own organizations. Even if they do participate in institutional politics, especially in



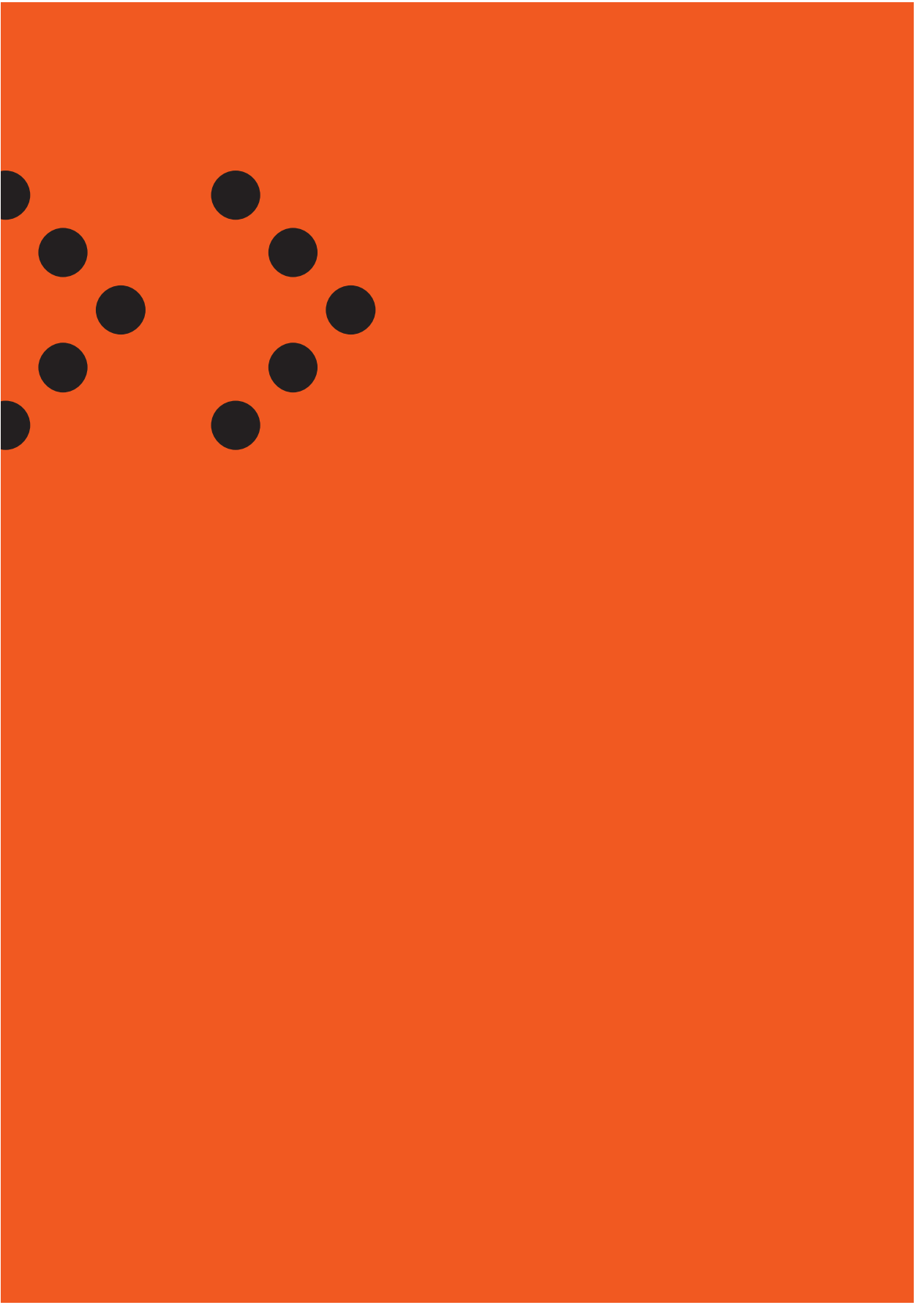
decision-making political institutions, their political influence is negligible. Motivated by these findings, we have decided to gather the relevant data that will demonstrate how necessary it is to increase the political participation of youth in institutional politics and, hopefully, stimulate the political elite to be more open to encourage and include young people into the political arena.

We would like to, in this manner, thank all those that have kindly assisted us with our research and delivered the desired information in a short period of time, Ms. Vlasta Ilišin from the Institute of Social Research in Zagreb, who has prepared the questionnaire and analyzed the obtained data, and the donors that have been supporting our activities for years.

Martina Stažnik







01 Introduction: political marginalization of youth

» **ALL THOSE DEALING WITH YOUTH** in theory or practice, are permanently occupied with the issue of their optimal integration into society, where that integration presents a process and an aim to yearn for, at the same time. This process includes a number of aspects of everyday lives of modern youth - from socialization in the family, over education and employment, to political activity.

When talking about the political activity of youth, the analyses usually focus on their active participation in social processes and activities, and in that context, the political participation of youth seems to be especially problematic. This participation is manifested through institutional and extra-institutional forms, where those forms can be mutually complementary or compensatory (mostly when the channels of entry into institutional politics are not open or are inadequate). This analysis focuses primarily on institutional political participation of youth in the decision-making bodies at local level, as the highest degree of political participation of citizens in local communities. Without contesting the importance of extra-institutional forms of political activity - especially when it comes to development of political culture and democratic behavior patterns - the focus on the institutional political participation issue comes from the fact that in a democratic and pluralistic society, different interests of citizens are dominantly articulated, represented and realized through and within political institutions. To put it differently, political power, that is, the power of making decisions on conditions and manners of realization of existing interests, is concentrated in political institutions, primarily in institutions of power.

Contemporary researches in the world and in Croatia have indicated that the young, when compared to the elderly, participate less in the election process, they are more often not party oriented, they are less often members of political parties and they are under averagely represented in institutions of power (Griffin, 1993; Hackket, 1997; Ilišin, 1999). When, for example, national institutions of power are observed, it is visible that they are, along with men and highly educated members, permanently dominated by middle-aged politicians, that is, persons between 40 and 60 years of age (Hague, Harrop, Breslin, 1998; Ilišin, 1999). The existing weak participation of youth in political institutions and processes has been recognized in democratic countries as one of the main problems connected with the young, and also as a threat to the future of representative democracy (Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001).



From the mentioned and other reasons hampering the process of social and political integration of youth, the political institutions of European Union devote more and more attention to this problem, trying to include the opinions of youth in conceiving a common youth policy. Starting from the fact that modern generations of youth “achieve an independent status at an ever later age” (*Novi poticaji...*, 2002: 6), today it is considered necessary to create a social space for equal expression of ideas of youth, as well as conditions for the realization of their interests and needs. Research, thematic discussions and political consultations with representatives of youth within the European political institutions, have resulted in insights, which show that young Europeans want to participate in democratic processes, but that they have a prevailing distrust toward political institutions and an attitude that political protagonists do not look after the specific interests of youth. The young want to be included in political processes (primarily at local levels) and believe that the image of their lack of interest in politics actually reflects the lack of resources, information and capabilities for active political activity. At the same time, they think that the exclusion of youth from politics prevents “the correct functioning of democracy”, that the “right to participation is a basic right which must be applied to all people, without discrimination”, as well as that there is “a need for expanding participation beyond organizations the young are members of, and outside of issues characteristic of youth” (*Novi poticaji...*, 2002: 33).

In the endeavor to encourage the political engagement of youth, European countries practically use several instruments for stimulating the political participation and influence of youth. The main form of participation of youth are local, regional and national levels of youth councils, and in some countries, youth parliaments. However, the existing experience has shown that the existing mechanisms of encouraging political engagement of youth do not cede desirable results. The analysis of A. Schizzerotto and G. Gasperoni (2001) points to several weaknesses in the functioning of youth councils which, otherwise, work either as umbrella non-governmental organizations of youth associations, or as state councils which include youth and state representatives. To be more specific, those councils seem to represent only a minority of the young generation, they are not representative of interests of all social groups of youth, the motivation for membership in youth associations is becoming ever more pragmatic and utilitarian instead of (Promethean) activism, and that often the representatives of youth are no longer young themselves, thus being less reliable representatives of interests of the generation. Of course, one needs to note here that the criticism addressed to the functioning of existing youth councils are similar to those usually addressed to representative political institutions. That is why the observed deficits are no reason to forsake the need to represent the interests of



youth at the political scene, but must be used to determine the adequate direction in search for such forms of engagement of youth that might correct the undesirable effects of existing forms.

However, in the context of political participation of youth as a problem, some type of avoiding of the issue on increasing the participation of youth in traditional political institutions and processes is symptomatic. After an insight into the reports of European countries on youth policies, it has been determined (Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001) that there is a lack of systematized information on participation of youth in traditional forms of gaining political influence (voting, membership in parties, being a candidate in elections, share in representative institutions of power). The existing data, on the other hand, indicate that young Europeans participate in elections 2-10% less often than average, that there is about 1,5% of them in local, regional and national representative institutions, and that the trust in political institutions is expressed only by one third of the young (Ilišin, 1999; Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001). The main reason for neglecting the issue of traditional forms of political participation of youth can be found in the tendency of most analysts to observe that political participation “more as a specific, immature and limited channel reserved for the influence of youth - such as youth organizations and councils and youth parliaments - than as a way adults use to occupy positions in conventional political processes” (Schizzerotto, Gasperoni, 2001:65). Just such a neglect of the problem of under average participation of youth in political institutions is a reason more for continual monitoring and research of institutional political activity of youth, especially their representation in decision-making bodies.

The Croatian young mostly share in the destiny of their European counterparts, when it comes to the participation in traditional political institutions and processes, and they are in a worse position when it comes to youth councils, that have yet to be established in Croatia. However, in order to understand the actual political status of youth in Croatia, it is important to remember the fact that in 1990 there have been radical changes in the social and political system. Transition from one to another social and political order is necessarily marked by social instability and crisis process, and due to those characteristics of transition, in principle, it should have created suitable conditions for a higher penetration of youth into the political sphere in general, and institutions of power in particular (Braungart & Braungart, 1989.). Looking back six decades into the past, one could say that such circumstances took place in Croatia after World War Two, and then during the breakdown of the totalitarian (socialist) system at the end of the 20th century and the establishment of a new, multi-party and democratic political order. To be more specific, it would be logical to assume that the creation of a new state community



and the abandonment of historically spent ideological and political projects - along with the effort to construct appropriate political institutions and relationships based on different ideologies and political programs - would in principle demand and favor the engagement of new political powers, not compromised in the old regime. However, the mentioned socio-historic circumstances and political upheavals have not resulted in the theoretically expected and equal political consequences for the young in any of the two previously addressed cases.

After World War Two, the young who participated in the war on the winner side, have occupied the new institutions of power in Croatia (as well as in the former Yugoslavia) to a great degree, where most of them stayed in positions of authority until their later years or even until their death. Certain generational shifts took place only occasionally, as a subsidiary aftereffect of political alternations, so the entrance of youth into the political nomenclature occurred, as a rule, only to a degree necessary to fulfill the emptied positions. That way the young slowly reached the margins of politics in the socialist era, where analyses have shown, at the same time, that they were the segment of population which mostly gave up on the proclaimed ideology and the project of construction of a socialist society (Santrić, 1989), and that they have considerably more than adults accepted the liberal values already entering the Croatian society (Ilišin, 1999). Thus, it was logical to expect that in the transition from a totalitarian into a democratic political system, youth would be one of the key protagonists of radical changes followed by the inauguration of a new political order.

However, the political events in contemporary Croatia - as in most other transitional countries - were not characterized by political affirmation of the young generation. On the contrary, along with socioeconomic, their political position worsened in most elements compared to the last decade of socialism. Thus, youth in transitional Croatia went through a double political marginalization, both as objects and as subjects of political processes. Firstly, their problems and needs were rarely in the focus of interest of the public and the media - aside from several undesirable forms of behavior (addiction, sport-related violence, delinquency and so on), which was mostly presented in an overly large form and in a sensationalistic manner - as well as political protagonists and institutions of power (which at the same time indicates that the interests of youth were sporadically present in the process of political decision-making). Thus, it was already 2003 when *The National Programme of Action for Youth* was adopted as a document in which, among other things, those in power declaratively and really (to a measure the program would be realized) express their intention to more effectively tackle the problems of youth, among which is the issue of improving their active participation in society. For the purpose of realizing



the mentioned goal, the Program recommends several measures, such as: giving an active suffrage in local elections to young people when they turn 16 years of age, setting up youth councils and innovation of the content of education for democracy in secondary schools (*National program...*, 2003: 63).

Secondly, the political influence of youth is negligible because they - along with the facts their attitudes do not reach the public to a necessary degree and they, as a generation, are atomized and fragmented - participate very little in institutional politics, especially in institutions of power where decisions are made. The results of all the previous researches in Croatia are identical and congruent to European findings: youth is under averagely represented in political institutions and processes. Thus the researches of electoral behavior in Croatian citizens indicate that the young people more often (approximately 5%) than the elders declare themselves as politically undecided, and they state 5-13% more often than adults that they will not vote in elections (Ilišin, 1999: 2005). It was also determined that the young are twice less likely to be members of political parties than adults, where both the young and their elders indicated a decrease in enthusiasm during the transitional period, caused by the appearance of political pluralism - to be more specific, while in the early 1990s a quarter of youth declared its membership in some political party, today its party membership is stable at 5%, unlike the 9% of adults claiming to be party members (Ilišin, 1999; 2002; 2005). Still, the most devastating data are those on representation of youth in institutions of power at national level. It is not unexpected that in all the Croatian governments since 1990 until now, there has been no one younger than 30 years of age, but it is less expected that their representation in the Croatian Sabor (Parliament), as a representative body, was negligible. Analyses of representation of youth in the national parliament in its five mandates (Ilišin, 2003; 2005) indicate that their representation ranged from complete absence (in the first mandate) to 2,6% at the most (in the fourth mandate), which levels their average representation in the Croatian Sabor during the transitional period at 1,7%. The mentioned data is evidence to an extreme under representation of youth, that usually makes up approximately 21% of the electoral body in Croatia, as well as proof of changes that took place in comparison to last two decades of the socialist regime, when there were 7% of young members in the Sabor of the Republic of Croatia on average (Ilišin, 1999). Another relevant information is that young parliamentarians since 1992 until today have been coming from only three parties (SDP¹, CDU² and in one case CPP³). This indicates that out of 30 parties that have passed through the Croatian parliament so far, less than a tenth of them demonstrated readiness to donate trust to their youngest members by positioning them on relatively perspective places on party lists in parliamentary elections.

¹ Social-Democratic Party / ² Croatian Democratic Union / ³ Croatian Peasant Party



The previously portrayed data on political participation of young people are similarly supplemented by the findings of a research on their subjective perception of politics that to a great degree corresponds to the opinions of their European peers. It should certainly be emphasized that youth in Croatia is aware of its own political marginalization, which is illustrated by data from the research of the Croatian young generation conducted in 1999 and in 2004 (Ilišin, 2002; 2005). More specifically, the results indicate that, in comparison to women and national minorities, the young perceive their own generation as the group which is in the most disadvantaged political position, three quarters of which consider that the young are not represented enough in Croatian political life, and only somewhat less hold that it is necessary to legally ensure political participation of youth in Sabor. The reasons of their own political marginalization are recognized by the young caused both as a generational issue and as a social issue. Thus, on the one side, a part of young people believe that their peers are critically distant from politics (indicated by the following attitudes: politics are unfair, so the young do not want to get engaged, the political protagonists do not deal with issues the young consider to be important, and their peers are overly preoccupied by their own existential problems in order to actively engage in politics), and on the other side, a part of the young population considers their counterparts to be incompetent and uninterested (in other words, they think politics is boring, and that young are not experienced or competent enough to be active in politics, which makes it natural that only adults are the active ones). It is, hence, obvious that the young address a portion of the guilt to their own generation; however, attitudes that delegate the guilt to society, which does not trust youth enough has more supporters. This is why it is not surprising to find that trust in the highest institutions of power (Sabor, the Government and the President of the Republic) oscillates among the young from 21 to 50%.

Having in mind the mentioned trends, it was expected that the interest of youth in politics - which is permanently at the end of the ranking list of their interests anyway - has in the transitional period decreased significantly: while in the last decade of the socialist period only a quarter of youth was completely uninterested in politics, in the period of transition that number has doubled. Such changes in the (lack of) interest in politics point to the conclusion that the legal enrichment of the supply of ideological-political options at the political scene has not won over the young generation for politics, on the contrary, it has pushed them away even more - perhaps exactly because of the new closed environment that had appeared along with competitive politics and elections. The second important implication of the weakening interest in politics is reflected in the fact that it must significantly contribute to the self-marginalization of youth, which additionally petrifies their exclusion from political life.



The Croatian party elite testified to some aspects of the relationship of society toward youth, in a research on attitudes of politicians on social and political position of youth (Ilišin, 1999). The Croatian politicians acceded with the thesis that youth is not adequately represented in Croatian politics, and when asked why there is no more young people in institutions of power, most of them answered that the elders simply do not wish to relinquish their positions to young people, especially as candidates on party lists in elections. They have explained that the principles of seniority and party favors are at work in parties, so in the fight for positions of power, primacy is given to relatively older activists who have been working for the benefit of the party in local circumstances and at national level for a longer time. At the same instance, the inter-generational relationships in their own parties were perceived as good, and at the social level no phenomena that potentially might lead to a clash of generations were identified, because of the evaluation that the Croatian society was burdened by significantly larger problems during the mid 1990s, which necessarily put possible generational disaccords into the background.

In their perception of inter-generational relationships in contemporary Croatia, politicians are quite similar to the opinions of young people. Specifically, the previously mentioned researches have determined that out of all the social inequalities - for example, socio-class, socio-cultural, educational, political, national, gender and religious - the generational inequalities are perceived as the least emphasized by the young (Ilišin, 2002; 2005). The empirical data indicate that a third to two fifths of young people believe that their generation's social position is worse than the position of adults, and since it has already been shown that three quarters of them think the young are politically marginalized, it would seem that, for the most part, they do not consider their own political status to be an integral part of their total generational social status. This neglect of the importance of their own political position necessarily assumes the acceptance of a socially widely-spread paternalistic relationship toward youth, whose integral part is the demand, or at least the expectation that youth should not be engaged in important and responsible social activities such as, for example, political decision-making.

Based on the previously presented findings on the political attitudes and political participation of youth in Croatia, it is realistic to assume that their participation in local politics is under average as well. So far, such information has not been systematically gathered nor analyzed, because the attention of analysts was primarily focused to national political institutions and processes. There are two basic reasons for this: the acceptance of the conventional concept of local politics as a second-rate subject compared to national politics, and the fact that after the establishment of Croatia as an independent state, only in the 2001 elections there



appeared conditions for their implementation at the entire Croatian territory and under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Croatian state authorities (Kasapović, 2004: 83). Henceforth, the political protagonists and processes at local level have started to stimulate a greater interest of analysts and the wider public only owing to excess events taking place in some local self-government units, which at the same time had far more reaching political implications.

Relying on the analysis of M. Kasapović (2004), one needs to warn about several characteristics of political processes at local level. For starters, it needs to be pointed out that local elections - which are an inseparable democratic precondition for the establishment of local institutions of power - are hierarchically subordinated to national elections, where they are characterized by a smaller turnout of voters. This is true for Croatia as well, where the average voter turnout for parliamentary elections during the transitional period was approximately 73% - more than other transitional countries and less than European countries with a longer democratic transition ((c)iber, 2005: 88) - while, for example, the local elections in 2001 had an average voter turnout of 47% (Kasapović, 2004: 88). The smaller interest of citizens in local elections is usually related to their perception of a small influence the local institutions of power have on national politics, the judgment that local election issues are to a great measure a reflection of issues at the national level, and a smaller trust in local political protagonists and institutions. Along with that, it is believed that the political behavior of voters is critically influenced by their party identifications, which is why local elections are primarily elections for political parties. Hence, the local elections and the constitutions of institutions of power may be seen as a “reflex” of national elections and political processes. In spite of that, the different degree of political mobilization and participation of citizens often results in different results of national and local elections. It is not rare to find that the political parties that had won the parliamentary elections achieved poorer results at local elections, usually interpreted as a test of citizen support for the national government during its mandate.

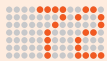
On the other side, local elections are observed as “autonomic political processes” where the behavior of voters is not primarily conditioned by party identification because significant influence belongs to issue orientations and the perception of candidates running for office in local elections. In those elections, a higher chance for success belongs to smaller parties and independent lists and candidates, favored by smaller conditions set for candidates, the saturation of the electorate with established national parties and a greater readiness of voters to undertake political experiments in less risky, “side-line” elections.



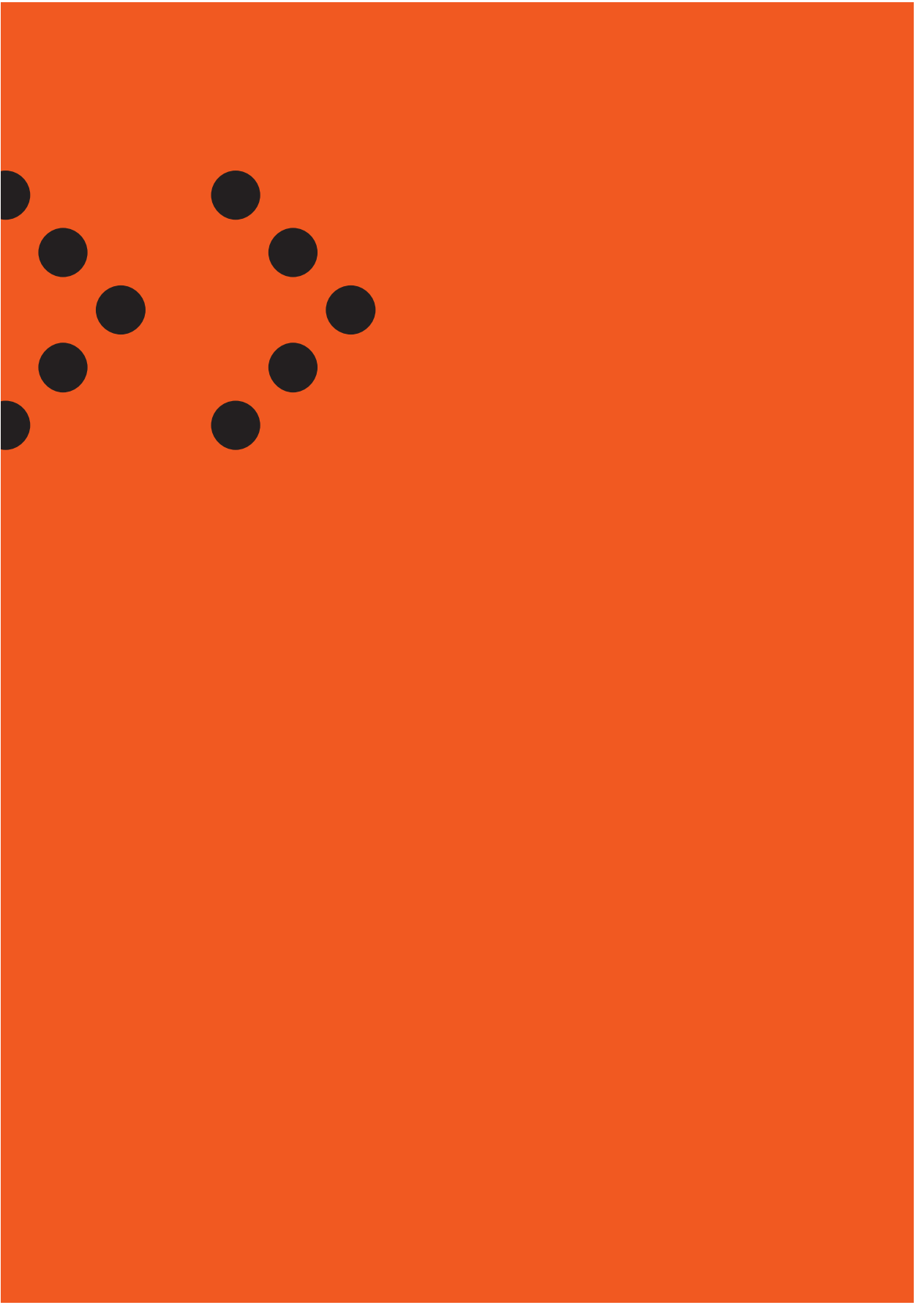
M. Kasapović concludes that local elections in Croatia - conducted by the same election rules as the national elections - have partly been confirmed as a reflection of national elections, and partly as an autonomous political process. The coinciding with political processes going on at the national level is easily seen in the accented identification of voters with the nationally established political parties and the expansion of coalition arrangements when establishing executive institutions at local levels, often formed using the same pattern that was used in the national government. The autonomy of local political processes, on the other hand, is visible in the weaker political participation of the electorate and a higher penetration of political protagonists who do not belong to established parties, in the local election process and the institutions of power.

Our analysis, although primarily directed at questioning the status of youth in institutions of local government, should demonstrate whether some of the mentioned trends are present after the latest local elections as well. Hence, in the context of the research about the representation of youth in bodies of local government in Croatia, a query is set on whether the local political protagonists and voters are more prone to political experimentation when creating election lists and voting at local elections, in such a way to give greater trust to youth as a politically marginal group. In this type of analysis, the young are joined by women as another politically marginalized group, where the issue of political participation of young women is of utmost importance. The analysis of the selected socio-structural attributes of local institutions of power is also important due to the notorious tendency to recruit most of the political elite at the national level from the lines of those politicians with previous experience in local politics, along with party officials and meritorious members. Thus, the analysis of certain socio-structural characteristics of local institutions of power enables an insight into one of the most important resources used for selection of the national political elite, as well as indirectly enabling an insight into some criteria of selection that the parties use. Observed from the viewpoint of young people, their representation in local institutions of government is an important indicator of potential generational political power in local communities, which should allow them to realize at least some of their specific interests and needs in the environment they live in.









02 Research methodology

»» **THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF THIS RESEARCH** was to establish the representation of youth in institutions of power in the Republic of Croatia and their party membership, as well as their basic socio-structural characteristics. For the purpose of determining those characteristics, the party membership and certain socio-structural attributes of all members of local authorities and the sub-group of young officials in particular. The definition of young members of institutions of power includes all those aged 18 to 29 years of life, corresponding to the specification explained in the National program of action for youth (2003: 11).

The research *sample* consisted of executive and representative bodies in 21 counties - including the City of Zagreb, which has the status of a county - and 123 cities in Croatia, formed after the local elections held in May 2005. The sample of local institutions of power was reduced to regional and city levels, because this was the first research dealing in the socio-structural attributes of local authorities and, taking into consideration this situation, it would be difficult to conduct a research that would include all the local self-government units. Specifically, there are another 426 municipalities in Croatia with corresponding institutions of power, which would prolong the duration of the research hugely. With that in mind, we had assumed that the data gathered in cities and counties would be sufficient for establishing a valid insight into existing structural trends.

The *instrument* used to gather data was a relatively short questionnaire. The questionnaires were filled out separately for county and city government and for county and city representative bodies. The questionnaire consisted of 11 questions:

- The type and level of the institution;
- The number of members of the institution;
- The number of representatives of political parties in the institution;
- The number of women members of the institution;
- The level of education of the members of the institution in question;
- The number of young members of the institution;



- The age structure of young members of the institution;
- The number of women among young members of the institution;
- The number of young representatives of political parties in the institution;
- The level of education of young members of the institution;
- The socio-professional status of young members of the institution.

The questionnaires were filled out by administrative services in local institutions of power. They were entered with aggregated data for each specific institution of power. In other words, data on the individual level, that is, for each member of an institution of power were not gathered separately, but were aggregated and systematized in the demanded manner based on available data on each member, and then entered into the questionnaire.

The *gathering of data* lasted from November 2005 to January 2006. The relatively long duration of that phase of the research is the consequence of nonexistence - except in rare occasions - of publicly available and systematized data on the basic structural characteristics of the institutions of power in most selected local self-government units. Since this is very indicative in itself, this analysis also contains a supplement on the difficulties and the specifics the associates have encountered during the data gathering process.

Data analysis was conducted on a total of 283 questionnaires, that is, for the same number of local institutions of power, where one institution represents a single analysis unit. For 100% comprehension of the planned sample, the data on the government and city council of a single city (Hrvatska Kostajnica) are missing, where the institutions of power have not been established, so their functions, until repeated local elections are conducted are performed by a commissioner of the Government of the Republic of Croatia. City governments have not been established in three small island cities with less than 3000 inhabitants (Stari Grad, Vis, Komiža), and their functions are in the jurisdiction of the city councils. The gathered data have been systematized in four basic sub-groups, and consist of:

1. 21 county assembly
2. 21 county government
3. 122 city councils
4. 119 city government.



The analyzed institutions of power are of different sizes: the county assemblies have anywhere from 41 to 52 members (44 on average), the county government have 10 to 13 members (averagely 12), the city councils usually have 11 to 35 members (18 on average), and the city government consist of 3 to 9 members (averagely 6). The total number of members in the researched institutions of power is 4125. Some officials have not yet been appointed during the data gathering period, so with them, the mentioned number would be somewhat larger, but that is a statistically negligible number.

The obtained data have been analyzed according to type (executive or representative) and level of power (county or city). The analysis was conducted for the total number of members in the institutions of power in local authorities and separately for young representatives of those institution.

Since the size (the number of members) of the grouped institutions of power influence the total results, table 1 portrays the joint overview of the number of members according to types and levels of the institutions of power.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO TYPE AND LEVEL OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS OF POWER IN CROATIA IN 2005

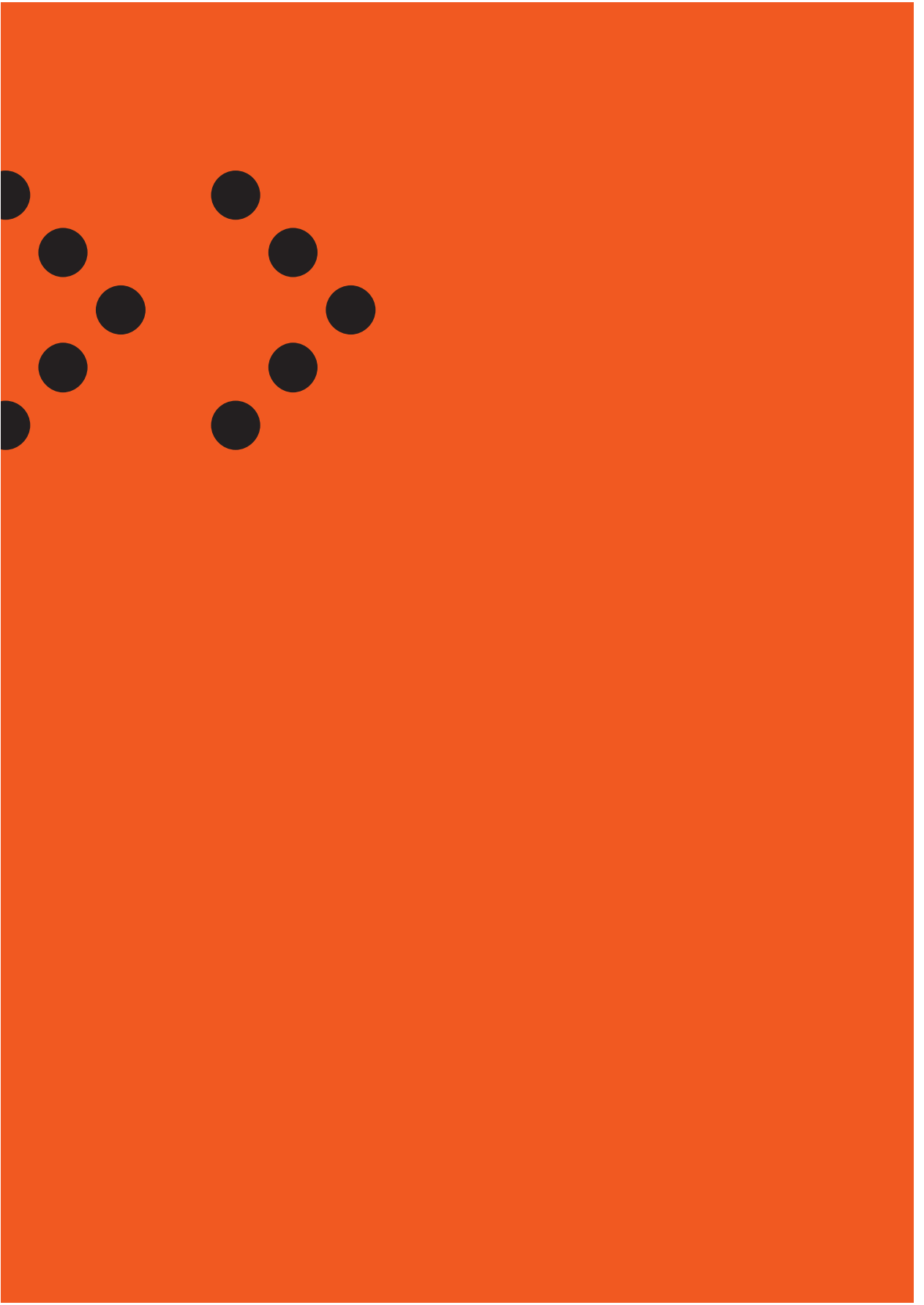
Institution of power (type and level)	Number of members	
	f	%
County assemblies	933	22,6
County governments	263	6,4
City councils	2172	52,7
City governments	757	18,3
Representative power - total	3195	75,3
Executive power - total	1020	24,7
Regional level - total	1196	29,0
City level - total	2929	71,0
Croatia - total	4125	100,0



As Table 1 clearly indicates, the most numerous single group are the city council members, just as the total number of local officials is dominated by the members of the representative power and the members of institutions of power at city level. Since, as a rule, the representative bodies consist of a larger number of members than the executive ones, just as there are more cities than counties (regardless of the fact that the county institutions of power are regularly larger in number than in the cities), the obtained results are quite expected. This conclusion means that the total results of the research on the structure of the local institutions of power are mostly determined by the structure of the representative bodies, and at city level.







03 Party and social structure of local government bodies

➤ **THE LATEST PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS** in Croatia were held in November 2003. The relative majority was won by CDU and with the support of a few smaller parliamentary parties, it had formed a coalition government it now has a dominant role in. A year and a half later, local elections were conducted, and it is interesting to observe the results achieved by parliamentary parties, as well as the possible existence of certain differences in the structure of political groups that had managed to enter the institution of local government. In the context of this research, it is important to know the party structure in order to determine through later analysis, those political parties and groups that had demonstrated the greatest readiness to give a chance to their young members.

Table 2 portrays the party structure in the observed institutions of local authorities along with data on the party composition of the fifth session of the Croatian Sabor at the moment it was established, at the end of 2003.

TABLE 2: PARTY STRUCTURE OF INSTITUTIONS OF LOCAL POWER IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)

Institution of power	CDU	SDP	CPP	CPP*	CPR	CSLP	CRP	IDA	Other	Ind.
County assemblies	29,3	18,7	11,9	8,2	8,3	4,9	4,1	2,4	10,3	2,1
County governments	28,9	14,1	9,9	9,5	12,2	5,7	4,9	3,4	9,5	1,9
City councils	30,0	16,0	8,7	7,8	5,7	4,7	3,8	4,2	8,6	10,5
City governments	31,6	15,7	5,8	7,5	5,7	5,2	3,6	4,6	7,4	15,7
Represent. power - total	29,8	16,8	9,7	7,9	6,5	4,8	3,9	3,7	9,1	8,0
Executive power - total	30,9	13,2	6,9	8,0	7,4	5,3	3,9	4,3	7,9	12,2
Regional level - total	29,2	17,6	11,5	8,4	9,1	5,1	4,3	2,6	10,1	0,8
City level - total	30,4	15,2	8,0	7,7	5,7	4,8	3,7	4,3	8,3	11,8
Croatia - total	30,1	15,9	9,0	7,9	6,7	4,9	3,9	3,8	8,7	9,1
Cro. Parliament 2003	43,4	19,1	7,2	6,6	4,6	1,3	2,0	2,6	7,3	5,9

Key: Ind.: independent lists and candidates



It is visible from table 2 that the five strongest parties in the Parliament have remained in the same balance of power after the local elections. However, the two strongest parties - CDU and SDP - have won proportionately less seats in local elections, and CPP⁴, CPP and CPR⁵ and the smaller parliamentary parties have been somewhat more successful than in the parliamentary elections. It is not surprising that they are joined by independent lists and candidates, as well as a larger number of small parties. Thus, there are 5,9% of independent parliamentarians in Sabor at the moment, who have entered the parliament both from party lists and as representatives of national minorities, and it is occupied by parliamentarians from 14 parties altogether. At the same time, the representatives of 42 different parties were elected in the institutions of local authorities, not counting the independent lists and candidates - this is three times the number at the national level, even though it still only includes only two fifths of 103 registered political parties in the Republic of Croatia. This information means that the voters were more prepared to experiment in local elections, which had resulted in a more plural party scene at the local level than is the case at the state level.

Table 3 portrays the joint gender and educational structure of officials elected into institutions of local authorities, and compared to the same type of indicators from Sabor.

TABLE 3: GENDER AND EDUCATION STRUCTURE OF LOCAL INSTITUTIONS OF POWER IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)

Institution of power	Gender		Level of education							
	Fem.	Male	PS	VET	SS	Coll.	Univ.	MA.	PhD	N/A
County assemblies	17,7	82,3	0,8	2,7	29,1	15,1	33,2	4,1	2,4	12,6
County governments	16,7	83,3	0,8	0,8	14,0	10,3	62,4	5,3	2,3	4,1
City councils	17,4	82,6	1,4	5,7	36,6	13,2	31,8	2,1	1,8	7,5
City governments	13,3	86,7	0,1	0,7	21,4	18,1	50,8	4,8	1,8	2,3
Represent. power - total	17,5	82,5	1,2	4,8	34,3	13,8	32,2	2,7	1,9	9,0
Executive power - total	14,2	85,8	0,3	0,7	19,5	16,1	53,8	4,9	2,0	2,7
Regional level - total	17,5	82,5	0,7	2,3	25,8	14,1	39,6	4,4	2,3	10,8
City level - total	16,3	83,7	1,1	4,4	32,7	14,5	36,7	2,8	1,7	6,1
Croatia - total	16,3	83,7	0,9	3,8	30,7	14,4	37,6	3,2	1,9	7,5
Cro. Parliament 2003	17,8	82,2	0,0	1,3	11,2	9,2	51,3	9,9	17,1	0,0

Key: Fem.: female; PS: primary school; VET: vocational education and training (3 years); SS: secondary education; Coll.: college education; Uni.: university education; MA.: master of arts/sciences; PhD.: doctor of arts/sciences; N/A.: not available/unknown.

⁴ Croatian People's Party / ⁵ Croatian Party of Rights



It is interesting that the representation of women among political officials at national and total local level is almost identical. Hence, the entrance of women into local politics is not as mitigated as should be expected in principle, however, the women themselves must be expressing less readiness to engage in the work of local centers of power. If the gender structure is observed according to specific types of institutions, the data are not surprising - women are noticeably less represented in executive authorities, especially regarding the city governments (for comparison sake, the present Government contains twice more, 26,7% to be precise). The reason for the observed trends might be a stronger pressure of the patriarchal model of gender relationships in local environments, which does not stimulate the public activity of women, because it deters the parties, women themselves as well as voters from including more women into local electoral processes. The similar representation of women at local and national levels is problematic, having in mind the fact that this narrows the resources used to recruit women with some political experience for adequate participation in national politics. On the other side, the leveled representation of women at all levels of power may also be interpreted as an indicator of a wider acceptance of the idea of gender equality - it is still far from being realized, but it is obviously equally accepted by national and by local party elites drawing up their election lists.

On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the education structure of the state and the local government. While all the members of the Government of the Republic of Croatia have an academic education, and almost 90% of parliamentary representatives has some level of higher education, there is only somewhat more than 50% of such persons among local officials. It is especially significant that the administrative services have no information on the level of education of 7,5% of local officials, pointing to the conclusion that personal education in local politics is less important, because it is probably relatively successfully compensated by personal and family image and connections, material wealth, inclusion into the network of local initiatives and interests, and so on. However, the members of local authorities are still above averagely educated when compared to the citizens of Croatia, those older than 25, where there are approximately 15% of highly educated persons (Ilišin, Mendeš, Potočnik, 2003: 62).

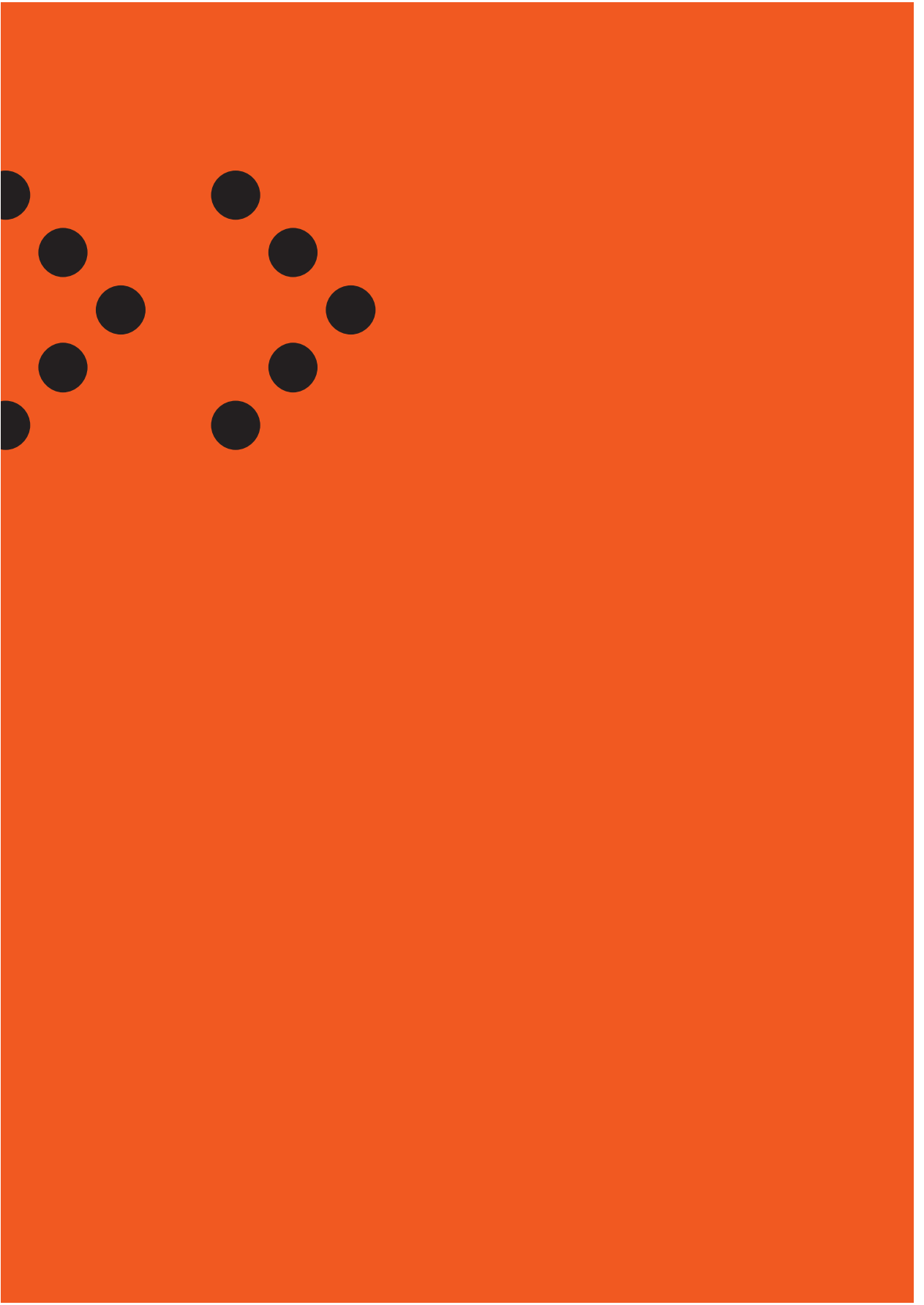
It is completely expected that the academically educated officials prevail in the executive institutions (especially in county governments), as well as that the number of more educated officials increases with the level of power, which is why the members of the regional institutions of power are, on average, more educated than their colleagues from the city institutions of power. The political executive power, by its nature, demands experts in different fields, because operative decisions must



be made, and it is logical that the governments are filled by mostly highly educated members. The higher concentration of officials with university education at regional level is probably an indicator of the party selection, characterized by the set-up of somewhat more strict criteria for determining of candidates for higher levels of power. To be more specific, some of the personal characteristics adequate for local levels must not be functional at the regional level any longer, so the more objectified indicators of personal competence gain on importance.







04 Youth in local institutions of government: representation and socio-structural attributes

- **THE PRECEDING INSIGHTS VAGUELY DESCRIBE** the political and socio-structural context, within which the representation and basic political and social attributes of young officials in local authorities should be observed and interpreted. With that in mind, the starting assumption is that the young are under averagely represented in local politics and that they differ from the older officials in their social characteristics.

4.1. Representation and political orientation of young officials

Table 4 outlines the aggregated data on the representation of youth in the institutions of local authorities as well as the dispersion of that representation.

TABLE 4: REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS OF POWER IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)

Institution of power	Representation of youth		No. of institutions with young members	
	f	%	F	%
County assemblies	57	6,1	21	100,0
County governments	11	4,2	8	38,1
City councils	163	7,5	81	66,4
City governments	29	3,8	25	21,0
Representative power - total	220	7,1	102	71,3
Executive power - total	40	3,9	33	23,6
Regional level - total	68	5,7	29	69,0
City level - total	192	6,6	106	44,0
Croatia - total	260	6,3	135	47,7
Croatian Parliament 2003	3	2,0		



As one may see, there are 6,3% of young persons in all the institutions of local authorities in Croatia, which is three times the number found in the national parliament, but still considerably less than in the Croatian electoral body (almost four times less). Certainly, the young are considerably more present in the representative than in the executive power - out of all the young officials, 84,6% of them are in the representative, and 15,4% are in the executive institutions (unlike the quarter, which is the number of all local officials in the executive institutions at local level). It is interesting, at that, that the city councils seem to be most accessible, and the city governments closed for the most part. If, on the other side, the institutions of power where there are no young persons are disregarded, their numbers span from 1 to 7 in the representative institutions, and from 1 to 3 in the local executive.

The degree of representation of youth is indicated by the data on the number of institutions of local authorities where there are, or are no young officials at all. It is interesting that the regional institutions are more open to young persons in that regard, pointing to the fact that the parties are more prone to candidate young persons in county election lists. Thus, there is at least one young member in each county assembly, while the number of city governments followed by city councils with young members is below average. Based on the well known tendency that marginal groups find less attractive and responsible positions to be more accessible, the later data might be interpreted as an indicator of the tendency to perceive regional authorities - although higher in hierarchy - as less important by political parties (and probably among voters as well). For that matter, the jurisdiction of the city authority and the county authority differs and the citizens sense the aftereffects of city decisions more and more directly than with the county authorities. However, the responsibility for the fact that, for example, there are no young representatives in a third of all city councils, may be addressed to not only the local party elites, and even less by the electorate, but to a good degree to the young themselves, that is the youth sections of political parties. To be more specific, it is logical to assume that in certain local circumstances and in some party branches, the young, gathered in political youth organizations, have not succeeded in advancing themselves with their work and secure perspective positions at party lists, which had closed their path into the institutions of representative power at the very beginning.

It was mentioned in the introductory part that as young officials, all those aged 18 to 29 years of life are observed. The obtained results have demonstrated that the age span of young officials starts at 20 and ends with 29 years of life, so they have been separated into two age cohorts (Table 5).



**TABLE 5: AGE STRUCTURE OF YOUTH
IN INSTITUTIONS OF LOCAL POWER
IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)**

Institution of power	Age cohorts				Average age (in years)
	20-24 years		25-29 years		
	f	%	f	%	
County assemblies	15	26,3	42	73,7	25,7
County governments	2	18,2	9	81,8	27,6
City councils	31	19,0	132	81,0	26,5
City governments	1	3,4	28	96,6	27,3
Representative power - total	46	20,9	174	79,1	26,1
Executive power - total	3	7,5	37	92,5	27,4
Regional level - total	17	25,0	51	75,0	26,6
City level - total	32	17,6	160	82,4	26,9
Croatia - total	49	18,8	211	81,2	26,5
Croatian Parliament 2003	0	0,0	3	100,0	27,3

The pronounced domination of the older sub-group of young officials is immediately visible in Table 5. Actually, when the representation of youth is observed from the viewpoint of age cohorts, it may be seen that there is 1,2% of young representatives aged 24 or less in all the institutions of local authorities, and 5,1% of those aged 25 to 29 years of life. To put it differently, when the age limit of 25 years (which is the case of most official statistics in Croatia and in the rest of the world) is used to define who is young, it would be found that the young are present in local politics only symbolically, and in national politics not at all. The data clearly indicates that the political parties as well as voters seem to prefer young with enough social „maturity” and competence to assume some permanent social roles, which then qualifies them to enter the world of traditional politics.

It is again visible that the regional institutions of power (especially county assemblies) are most accessible, because they have a proportionally highest share of youngest officials. The average age of their young members, spanning from 25,7 to 27,6 years of age, also testifies to this. It is demonstrated as well that the concentration of young members of the executive institutions is highest at the upper age limit, where they are almost the same as young parliamentarians. All the mentioned



data undoubtedly point to the fact that political functions become more available to young persons only once they approach their exit from youth. According to that, most young persons who will, by gathering experience in local politics, eventually advance to the national level, will not achieve that before entering the younger middle age. It is, thus, obvious that the future young parliamentarians might be recruited from the narrow base of the youngest local officials or through some other, usually party channel.

Data on the representation of young persons among party representatives in the institutions of local authorities are portrayed in Table 6, which may be interpreted as an indicator of party generational politics. Observed from a different viewpoint, this data simultaneously demonstrates the party structure of young local officials.

TABLE 6: REPRESENTATION OF YOUTH AMONG MEMBERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND GROUPS, AND PARTY STRUCTURE OF YOUTH IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS OF POWER IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)

Institution of power	CDU	SDP	CPP*	CPR	CPP	IDA	CSLP	Other	Ind.
County assemblies	9,5	6,9	5,3	3,9	3,6	9,1	0,0	6,3	0,0
County governments	1,3	5,4	4,0	3,1	11,5	11,1	6,7	0,0	20,0
City councils	8,1	11,2	7,7	10,5	5,8	6,5	7,8	4,3	5,3
City governments	3,8	4,1	5,3	7,0	0,0	5,7	2,6	8,9	1,7
Represent. power - total	8,4	9,8	6,9	8,0	5,0	7,0	5,4	5,0	4,8
Executive power - total	3,2	4,4	4,9	5,3	4,3	6,8	3,7	6,2	2,4
Regional level - total	7,7	6,6	5,0	3,7	5,1	10,3	1,6	5,0	4,0
City level - total	7,0	9,6	7,1	9,6	4,7	6,3	6,4	5,4	4,0
Croatia - total	7,2	8,7	6,4	7,3	4,9	7,0	5,0	4,0	4,6
Croatian Parliament 2003	0,0	10,3	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
Party structure of youth									
in local authorities	34,2	21,9	8,1	7,7	6,9	4,2	3,8	6,7	6,5

Key: Ind.: independent lists and candidates



Regarding the opportunities given to youth, political parties may be distributed into three groups. The first group consists of those with a somewhat more systematic party rejuvenation policy at local level and it includes SDP, CDU, CPR and IDA⁶. The most prominent one among them is SDP because there are most young persons among all the local officials from that party, which corresponds to the data from the national level - in Sabor all the young members are from the ranks of SDP (to be more exact, two of them are party members, and one has been elected from that party list as an independent candidate), and at the same time, they represent one tenth of all the members of parliament coming from that party. CDU and IDA also demonstrate a readiness to give a chance to young people, although less than SDP, while this tendency is only distantly present with CPR. The second group of parties is occupied by only one (CPP*) whose representation of youth is within the Croatian average. The third group of parties is characterized by an under average representation of young persons. These are mostly independent lists and other (on average small) parties as well as CPP. The independent lists are instable political groups, who are not to be expected, by nature of things, to give account to young (or female) members in their ranks, but CPP is an established political party, and thus should be very interested in human resource rejuvenation. However, since this is a party with a traditionalistic orientation and with stronger leverage in rural areas - that are, on the one side, older demographically, and on the other, characterized by paternalism as an integral part of the still dominant patriarchal matrix of intergenerational relationships - it is not unexpected that the young are not among the groups favored in this party. Still, it is visible that the young officials coming from CPP and IDA are above averagely present in county assemblies, while the city councils are fortresses for youth from SDP.

When the representation of youth in local politics is observed from a standpoint of party structure, then it is obvious that a third of all 260 young officials comes from the ranks of CDU, more than a fifth from SDP, while all the other young officials are members of other parties and groups (spanning from 4 to 8%). The party structure of young officials actually reflects the situation in the entire local government to a great degree, where CDU and SDP are also the strongest parties. It is probably the strength of those parties that is an additional stimuli for their readiness to position more young persons in more perspective places at their election lists. For them it is less risky than for smaller parties, that simply do not have enough perspective positions in elections for meritorious party officials, whose primacy is considered to be out of the question. However, the size of the party is not a crucial condition for a better placement of youth, demonstrated by the case of IDA. The main role - along with the quantity and quality of the political engagement of the young - is still played

⁶ Istrian Democratic Assembly



by intra-party rules, regulating the status of young party members, and the political will to clearly define and consistently implement such a party program in election lists.

That the presence of youth among local officials of SDP, and to a degree, CDU is not a coincidence is demonstrated by the fact that ever since 1992 until today, among the total of 11 young parliamentarians, six of them came from the ranks of SDP, four of them from CDU and one from CPP. The consistent representation of young social-democrats among the officials at all levels of power undoubtedly points to an established party policy toward the young, also manifested through the higher representation of young members of SDP in the institutions of power and a greater effort exuded by the entire party (certainly with the mediation of young officials) to permanently actualize and question youth issues and problems at the Croatian political scene.

4.2. Gender and social structure of young officials

It has been demonstrated earlier that the representation of women in local and national authorities is mostly uniform at 17%, which is an indicator of under average representation of women in Croatian politics in general. It is intriguing to notice within that context the status of women within the group of young officials (Table 7).

**TABLE 7: GENDER STRUCTURE OF YOUTH
IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS OF POWER IN
CROATIA IN 2005 (%)**

Institution of power	Men		Women	
	f	%	f	%
County assemblies	39	68,4	18	31,6
County governments	4	36,4	7	63,6
City councils	121	74,2	42	25,8
City governments	25	86,2	4	13,8
Representative power - total	160	72,7	60	27,3
Executive power - total	29	72,5	11	27,5
Regional level - total	43	63,2	25	36,8
City level - total	146	76,0	46	24,0
Croatia - total	189	72,7	71	27,3
Croatian Parliament 2003	1	33,3	2	66,7



Among the portrayed data, the higher representation of women in the ranks of young officials than among all the officials is emphasized by its importance, which must be a consequence of several factors. Firstly, we may assume that young women are less under the influence of patriarchal values, as during their socialization process, as well as in existing circumstances, so they are more prepared and motivated to give political activity a try, including the acceptance of leading positions and more responsible duties. This assumes their greater inclusion into the work of political parties, which creates a wider basis the parties may use to choose their female candidates for performing political duties from. Aside from that, the possible reason for the higher representation of women among the young could be the practice of “double quota”, that is, the conscious placing of young women on more perspective positions at election lists, which means a simultaneous influence of the age and the gender structure of the lists, and hence, of the elected institutions of local authorities.

Looking at the gender structure of young officials according to the grouped institutions of power, it is especially interesting that young women are equally represented in both the representative and the executive bodies, and that the regional institutions seem to be more open to them than those in cities. Individually looking, regarding the total representation of young women, their pronounced above average representation in county governments and the significant under average representation in city governments - as if young women somehow „skip” the first step (cities) of political advancement and immediately start from the second (counties). We may assume that this takes place primarily through the will of party elites, where it would seem that the city authorities dispose with more concrete power, which is more appealing to men. Still, the fact remains that young women penetrate local politics easier than other women, the proof of which is the data that out of all the women in local government there is 10,3% of young women, while the number for men is smaller by twofold, that is, there is only 5,5% of young men. It should also be emphasized that the increased entrance of young women in local politics expands the base from which the women in national institutions of power should be recruited. If the penetration of young women into local politics is not coincidental, it might be assumed that in the nearer future the representation of women will improve at national level as well, especially in the parliament. If that does occur, the representation of women will still be significantly below 40% which is the lower limit aimed for in the gender-based redistribution of political power.

The type of data gathered in this research does not enable an insight into the parties proportionally most women come from, but if one has in mind the existing tendencies in the Croatian Parliament, it is possible to assume that the first one is SDP. Namely, out of 11 young representatives that had passed through Sabor in the



previous five election cycles, six were women (five of which came from the ranks of SDP), which may be interpreted by the fact that this party was regularly represented by a third of women (except after the first multi-party elections). SDP is usually the party placed in the group of modern socially-regulatory parties, according to its readiness to intervene into social relationship in order to improve the position of marginalized groups (Leinert Novosel, 1999), which is then manifested through the structure of elected representatives of that party in the institutions of power. This way, SDP is legitimized as a party with the most consistent practice of the gender equality policy, and when this is supplemented with a clearly defined youth policy, one of the logical consequences is the eased entrance of young female members of that party into institutions at all levels of government.

It is well known that the average duration of university education in Croatia is too long (over 7 years) and that a diploma is obtained by somewhat less than half of all those enrolled. These facts influence the education structure of youth in Croatia (with the note that in spite of such inefficiency of university education, each new generation of youth is more educated than the previous one), as well as the educational attainments of young officials in local authorities (Table 8). It is curious to notice that the administrative services had access to data on the level of education for all the 260 young officials, and that there are no MA's or PhD's among them.

**TABLE 8: EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE
OF YOUTH IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS
OF POWER IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)**

Institution of power	PS	VET	SS	Coll.	Univ.
County assemblies	0,0	0,0	63,2	12,3	24,6
County governments	0,0	0,0	0,0	18,2	81,8
City councils	0,6	3,0	52,8	12,3	31,3
City governments	0,0	0,0	27,6	24,1	48,3
Representative power - total	0,5	2,2	55,5	12,3	29,5
Executive power - total	0,0	0,0	20,0	22,5	57,5
Regional level - total	0,0	0,0	52,9	13,3	33,8
City level - total	0,5	2,5	49,0	14,1	33,9
Croatia - total	0,4	1,9	50,0	13,8	33,9
Croatian Parliament 2003	0,0	0,0	33,3	0,0	66,7

Key: PS: primary school; VET: vocational education and training (3 years); SS: secondary education; Coll.: college education; Univ.: university education.



To put it shortly, somewhat less than a half of all young officials have either a college or a university degree, and the most numerous group consists of those with a completed four-year secondary school program. This is a poorer educational structure than was found for entire institutions of local authorities (Table 3), which could be explained through the fact that a part of young people are still studying and that some day they will (or at least most of them will) acquire diplomas. Those with university education are concentrated in the executive institutions (especially at county level), where they are probably being treated as young experts.

The previous data is supplemented by the findings on the socio-professional status of young officials (Table 9), among which no secondary school students may be found (which has been foreseen as a possibility).

**TABLE 9: SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF
YOUTH IN LOCAL INSTITUTIONS OF POWER
IN CROATIA IN 2005 (%)**

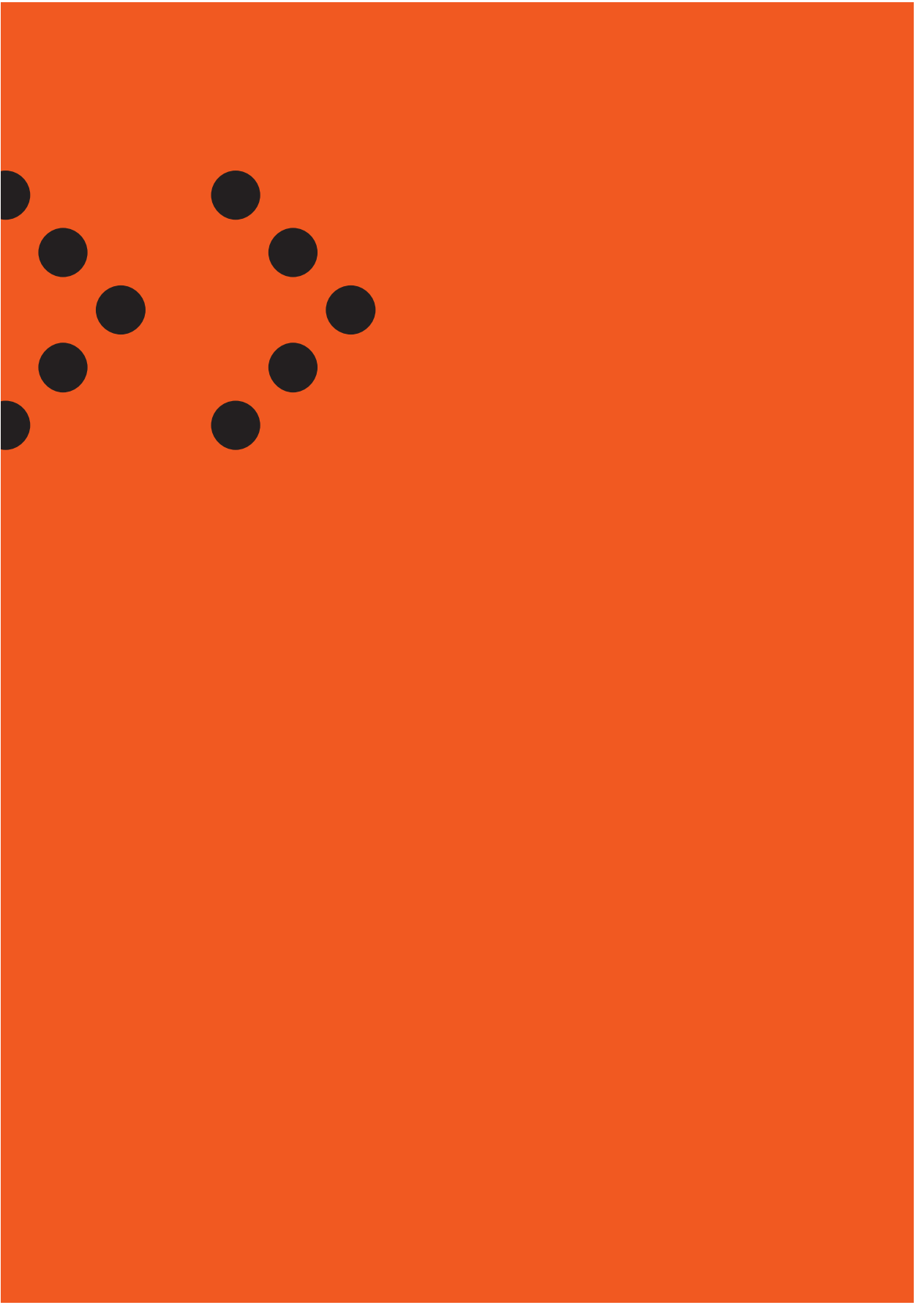
Institution of power	Employed	Students	Unemployed	Farmers
County assemblies	56,1	38,6	3,5	1,8
County governments	100,0	0,0	0,0	0,0
City councils	68,1	20,9	10,4	0,6
City governments	86,2	10,3	3,5	0,0
Representative power - total	65,0	25,5	8,6	0,9
Executive power - total	90,0	7,5	2,5	0,0
Regional level - total	63,2	32,4	2,9	1,5
City level - total	70,8	19,3	9,4	0,5
Croatia - total	68,8	22,7	7,7	0,8



It is certainly interesting that the young officials are dominated by employed persons. The second largest group are students, while there is a relatively small number of unemployed persons, with only a symbolic presence of farmers. Those who are employed perform a duty in the executive in an above average share, and some of them must be professionals, that is, full-time employees. Students, on the other side, are present in an above average share in the county assemblies. This type of distribution testifies to the fact that political parties primarily trust those young persons that have already completed their professional education and begun their professional career, while students (who are obviously more interested in politics than the unemployed) seem to be the main reserve resource. The negligible share of young farmers is almost definitely the consequence of a small number of young persons in agriculture in general, as well as the well known trend that the rural population demonstrates more reservation towards politics (and especially toward personal engagement in politics) than the urban population.



05



05 Concluding discussion

➤➤ **BASED ON EXISTING FINDINGS** about the participation of youth in political institutions and processes, one can state that Croatian politics is significantly characterized by uneven generational distribution of power. At that, one can determine that during the transitional period in Croatia, the young were politically marginalized in spite of the fact that within this relatively short period of time there occurred such historic, social and political circumstances three separate times, which, theoretically and empirically, benefit the stronger penetration of youth into institutional politics. The first time the young became losers in 1990 when, as a potentially new political power, unburdened by the heavy load of their political past, they did not manage to enter the frontlines. The aged political dissidents dominated back then, that had cashed in their long-term coerced absenteeism from the political scene by winning elections. The second time it happened in 2000, during the great shift of power after a ten-year period of monopoly of a single political party, when the young also failed to capitalize on their work and other merits or use the readiness of the public to accept new political options and persona. The opposition parties then gave primacy to meritorious and experienced politicians that had spent a decade (im)patiently waiting to win over their share of power. At the same time, the by then ruling party was preoccupied with determining the best possible positions in their election lists for the grown number of meritorious members trying to ensure their place in parliament after the loss of executive power. The third time it occurred was at the end of 2003, when the electoral will of dissatisfied citizens restored the (semi)reformed CDU. Neither most previously ruling parties nor CDU that had rid itself of a significant number of pronounced and publicly odious members, had offered on their lists new, not compromised candidates to their disappointed voters, who, by nature of things, should be recruited from the lines of the younger party members.

The unwillingness of older politicians to back off in favor of youth in Croatia is a more pronounced problem than in societies with a long democratic traditions, because, among others, there is no pluralism of elites alive in the contemporary Croatian society (Županov, 1995). To put it more bluntly, the transitional period



brought about the degradation of the otherwise rudimentary developed elites (managerial, scientific, cultural...) where - aside from the enormously fast run for media glory - only the high political status with its ingrained privileges survived as multiply desirable. Politics remained a lucrative activity, which, it must be admitted, brings with it less and less good reputation, but ensures power and socio-economic security, even in the transitional period, that is a very important stimulant for professional engagement in politics in a poverty stricken and economically fallen society. Such circumstances cause a widely spread suspicion of citizens along the lines that professional political activity is (too) often motivated by ensuring a lucrative sinecure, which is later defended by all available means, especially present in a society with significantly narrowed channels of social promotion. Thus it happens that the social power is firstly and fore mostly reduced to political power, which suppresses those that remain outside of institutional politics into the social margins. This, at the same instance, is also one of the reasons for the continuous increase of those aspiring to power and authority. Power is everywhere, especially in insufficiently plural and democratically deficient societies, a highly desirable, but limited resource. Since there are considerably more aspirants to power than there is available power, the disqualification of youth in the very beginning (as incompetent and inexperienced) becomes an efficient mechanism for reducing the already harsh competition.

In the modern society, discrimination according to age (ageism) has yet to become a political issue to the degree gender discrimination has, which is true for Croatia as well. However, it makes sense to assume that the inequalities based on age will gain more on its importance the less the Croatian society is going to be burdened by traditional ideological-political polarizations. More so, since in the democratic Europe, where young persons are also mostly not in positions of political decision-making, there is an ever more frequent articulation of demands for changing the given situation. One needs to emphasize again that the political participation of youth in developed democratic countries in Europe is at such a level that it is perceived as a real threat for the future of representative democracy. The situation is similar in transitional Croatia, where the activism of total social and political potentials of youth is that much more important because it might contribute to a speedier and quality consolidation of the democratic order, as well as the attempts for an optimal integration of Croatia into a united Europe. The available data indicated that the young in Croatia mostly do not differ from their European counterparts in their low level and unfavorable characteristics of political participation, which means that the young both in Europe and in Croatia are politically marginalized, mostly in traditional political institutions and processes.



This is the why European youth policies state as one of their most important goals the improvement of political participation of youth. This goal has been incorporated in the basic youth policy in Croatia as well, but with a relatively modest scope of demands. At this moment, the most important fact is that after more than a decade of suppressing youth into the margins of the social and political life, there is a political will to conceive a basis for leading a rational and integral youth policy. The (un)successfulness of this policy will also depend on the condition of the social awareness, on the political will of those in power, as well as the material resources, but to an equal degree it will depend on the intra-generational linking of youth for articulation and promotion of generational interests and needs. This means that the political engagement of youth is necessary, implemented as a synchronized activity in institutions of power and the civil sector, fore mostly through different associations, initiative and youth campaigns.

The common goal aimed at by both the youth associations and the young actively participating in institutional politics is the well-being of the young generation. In order for this to succeed, it is of the utmost importance that there is as many young in decision-making bodies as possible, that is, that their representation draws nearer to one fifth, as they are represented in the electorate. The analyses of participation of youth in national and local authorities in Croatia, undoubtedly indicate that it is under average and far from it that the young, even in a quantitative sense, might be perceived as a respectable political group. At that, there is also a following tendency: the higher the level of power, the lesser the representation of youth. The second pattern is that young persons find that representative institutions are more available to them than the executive power. Thirdly, among the young officials, those approaching 30 years of age are pronouncedly dominant, while those younger than 25 are only symbolically represented. Fourthly, the representation of women among young officials is higher than the share of women among all the officials. Aside from the mentioned trends, it was found that the educational structure of youth in institutions of local authorities is somewhat poorer than that of the older officials. One of the reasons is certainly the fact students make up more than a fifth of young officials. This trend is in its meaning ambivalent - on the one side, students, along with being the group of young people most interested in politics, are certainly more competent than the young persons that had completed their professional education with secondary school, however, on the other side, their age indicates that they are studying (too) long. This causes fears that a part of them will never finish their university education, which is in no way a recommendation for recruitment into the political elite.



Data on the party membership of local young officials indicate that most parties are not especially sensibilized regarding the problem of insufficient political participation of the young. From the results of this research and the findings obtained through the analysis of participation of youth in the national parliament, one may conclude that the systematic care about the political participation of youth is lead only by SDP and, partially, by CDU. The later party had, as the strongest party during the entire transitional period, the most space to leave a part of its positions in institutions of power to its younger members. SDP, the second strongest party, has extended opportunities to its young members continuously, even in periods when, as it happened in the first half of the 1990s, it had barely kept its parliamentary status. This party proclaims and practices regulation in the selection of party candidates, applying the principle of the so-called positive discrimination for women and youth as socially and politically marginalized groups. This is an instrument of internal corrective quota, that political parties use to proscribe the minimal percentage for representatives of socially marginalized groups in their election lists. Since SDP gives a proportionally highest number of young persons at all levels of government, as well as most women among them, the example of this party demonstrates that the consistent implementation of programmatic principles related to youth (and female) policy results in their higher participation in institutions of power.

The present findings suggest that the promotion and affirmation of marginal groups depends on the changes in public awareness, which, as a rule, happen slowly. The direction and speed toward the desired changes might be given by exactly those political parties that through the application of internally determined corrective quota become one of the main leverages for changing the unsatisfactory state (Nohlen, 1992). Specifically, experience suggests that societies whose public awareness is such that the political participation of traditionally discriminated groups might be completely left over to mechanisms of self-regulation and competition, are rare. If this is applied to the Croatian situation and youth, it is evident that the political affirmation of youth depends to a great degree on the will of political parties. The higher trust parties would show their young members would be a recommendation/ message to the public that youth may and should be treated as reliable, responsible and competent. Achieving this in Croatian political circumstances would be quite easy, because voters primarily vote for parties, so the possible excuses about how young, unknown candidates would deter voters from the party they prefers sound unconvincing. To be more concrete, the triangle youth - political parties - voters, the least limiting factor are the latter, that is the (un)willingness of voters to give their votes to young party candidates. Party branches and party youth organizations are significantly more important protagonists, because it crucially depends on the will of

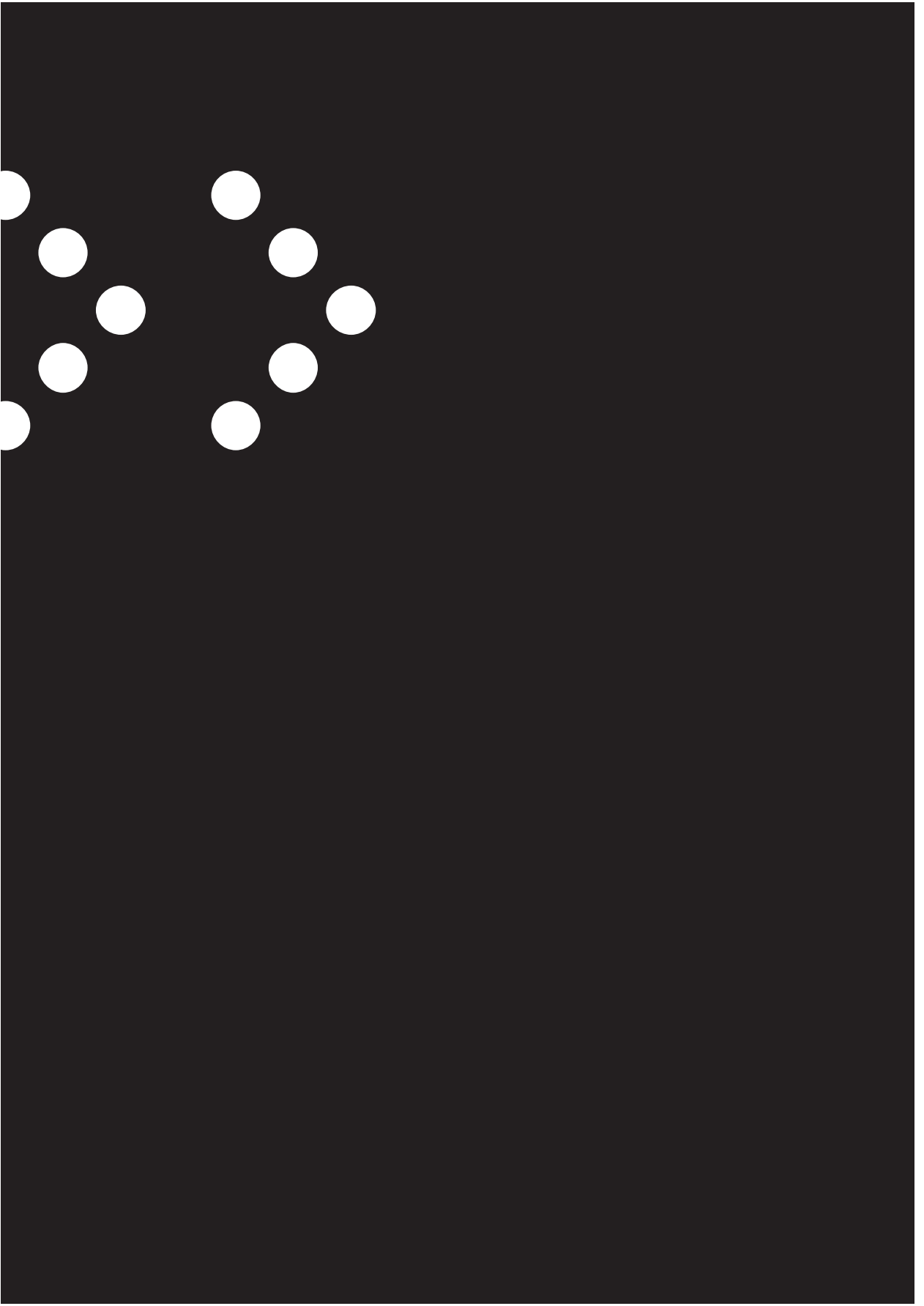


local party elites and the activism of party youths how the party election lists will be created, observed from the standpoint of representation of youth.

Since the legislative determination of minimal quota for youth (or women) for specific institutions of power would represent an encroachment upon the free will of the electorate - where it is indicative that such proscribed quota is refused in principle by most Croatian politicians, and advocated by most young people (Ilišin, 1999; 2002; 2005) - the most acceptable and most efficient mechanism remains the implementation of internal party quota at party lists at all levels. The age structure of the institutions of local authorities clearly indicates that most parties do not use this instrument, at least not in a purposeful manner. Even though it does not seem that for now the voters are punishing parties for the insufficient rejuvenation of their party lists, nor do they award those that do, the parties should, at least for their own survival, take into consideration their permanent renewal when it comes to human resources. The systematic policy of party rejuvenation would surely result in a higher representation of youth in institutions of power, and the side effects of this would be the social affirmation of youth in general and sensibilization of public to social problems, needs and role of youth. One of the ways to force political parties to take into account the interests of young people - both in society and in their own ranks - are public pressures that should come from associations and initiatives of the young. Such associations are the most appropriate channel for educational activity and public advocating in order to promote the interests of youth as an integral part of the society, the most vital and most flexible social resource, as well as the owner of creative and innovative potentials. Their activity might also assist those rare young people already participating in power to better represent their own generation, as well as oblige them to responsibly and persistently promote the interests of youth in their political activity.

Finally, it ought to be said that the opening of a wider space for future generations of young people in local and national politics will depend on the engagement of the current young officials as well. What is meant here is that it is not sufficient that the young are only represented in the institutions of power, but that the quality of their work in those institutions is very important too. Representation is a necessary precondition for obtaining influence, but active participation of young officials in the decision-making process - from starting initiatives over critical review and deciding to the phase of realization of the decisions made - is not the only legitimate way to realize an influence in a democratic institution of power, but the best possible form of public promotion of the political competence of youth. To put it shortly, quality political work of current young officials paves the way for an easier and stronger penetration of future young generations into institutions of power at all levels.







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P Supplement to the research: A comment of the difficulties in gathering data

➤ **THE GATHERING OF BASIC STATISTICAL DATA** used in this research has turned out to be a significantly more demanding activity than was initially foreseen and planned. During this process, different unexpected difficulties arose, which have slowed down the realization of that stage of the research. The number and the type of difficulty are a vivid illustration of the condition in the local government in Croatia, which is why we have decided to supplement the findings of the research with this comment. Data was gathered twice as long as was planned, from the end of November 2005 to mid January in 2006. The research was conducted in city and county administrations in the Republic of Croatia, and the initial contacts with administrative services in all cities and counties were made via phone, where they received an explanation of the purpose of the research and instructions for filling out the questionnaires. In mayor or county head offices we were redirected to different profiles of persons considered to be competent for our query, after which they were delivered a memorandum on the project along with the questionnaire (via fax machine or e-mail) and a noted due date for filling it out. This sometimes slowed down our work because those persons often did not consider themselves competent to give out the demanded information. At that we mean the city mayors, assistants to city governments, heads of social activities' offices, heads of administrative offices, persons in charge with public relations, city mayor's office assistants, county head's assistants, legal officials and even persons employed in accounting offices. It is, hence, obvious that there is no harmonized mechanism of informing the public at the level of local institutions of power in the Republic of Croatia.

During the data gathering process, only about 10% of cities/counties delivered validly filled out questionnaires in the first attempt. In all the other cases, additional explanations, corrections, queries and urgencies were needed. It often happened that instead of separate data for the executive and the representative institution of power, aggregated data were delivered, after which a demand for correction had to follow. There was also a discussion about the upper limit of age for someone to be considered young. *The National Programme of Action for Youth* defines youth as a population aged 15 to 29 years of life, but for many, those aged 35 were still young. The greatest problem were the updated statistical information on the members



of institutions of local authority, which means that not many cities/counties have unified data on basic information regarding their elected officials such as age, party membership, level of education and socio-professional status in one place. Some have, at that, pleaded the secrecy of those information, some mentioned that there is no legislation obligating them to keep such a registry, some that the information in question may only be given unofficially, and some directed us to private firms where the members of those institutions were actually employed. We have received a notion that most administrative services is not introduced with the *Law on the Right of Access to Information*, and the general image testifies to a low level of political culture and the widely spread political illiteracy of persons employed in the local institutions of power in Croatia.

The issue of party membership should be accented as an especially *sensitive* segment of this research. Different coalitions, before and after elections, the large number of independent lists, the frequent changes in party membership, the momentarily actual trade of seats and the crossings to independent council and assembly members, have partially rearranged the first official election results and cloud the insight into party membership, to us as researchers as well as to professional employees of administrative services. These changes influence the executive institutions to a greater degree than the representative bodies of power, where it is important that the mentioned party rearrangements occurred in a relatively smaller number of local self-government units, and that they have included only a minor part of the elected officials. In other words, post-election changes in the party system of the elected institutions of power are not of such a scope to put into question the relevance of the obtained data, but are extremely significant for further analysis of the dynamics of political relationships and the functioning of local authorities within the process of democratic consolidation.

The communication with representatives of cities/counties was satisfactory and correct, even though we have, on several occasions, contacted the persons which have in an informal way or even disrespectfully spoken of their colleagues. For the most part, the administrative services of cities/counties have gladly accepted cooperation, while a smaller number was resigned, perceiving the filling of the questionnaire as an additional unnecessary obligation. In that regard, some of the representatives from cities have directed us to their internet page so that we may gather the necessary information ourselves, or have even delivered them two months after the agreed date.

Even though we have at the very beginning of this research expected it not to be an overly complex or long lasting business, we remain surprised with the experience



on how difficult it is to gather information of general interest to the public. We had obviously too optimistically regarded that the standard statistical data should be easily accessible to interested citizens and institutions - if not via web-pages (there are several cities that might serve as positive examples in this regard) than by some other efficient mechanism of communication, which assumes a more flexible and professional bureaucracy. One should only hope that an increased of interest in local politics in Croatia might animate institutions of local authorities to gather and make available data on the social characteristics of local officials in a similar manner as it is done for officials in the institutions of power at national level.

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B/N BILJEŠKE / NOTES

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RESEARCH

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